GUNPOWDER AND GLORY by R.W. DALY

25¢

Adventure

JAN.

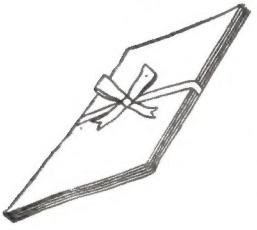
WETJEN
SURDEZ
MEYER
KJELGAARD
AND OTHERS

JAN. 1948

ADVENTURE

25 Cents

For once they actually agree!



Hope and Crosby, in the movies, seldom see eye to eye.

But there's one thing they really do agree on —they both think U.S. Savings Bonds make wonderful Christmas gifts!

SAYS BOB: "They're swell for *anybody* on your list. You couldn't pick a nicer, more sensible, more welcome present. Even Crosby knows that."

SAYS BING: "I hate to admit it, folks, but Hope is right. And remember this—you can buy Bonds at any bank or post office in the U. S. A."

BOB AND BING (together): "This Christmas, why not give the finest gift of all—U.S. Savings Bonds!"

Give the finest gift of all ... U.S. SAVINGS BONDS

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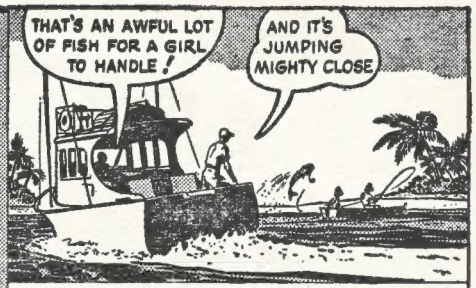
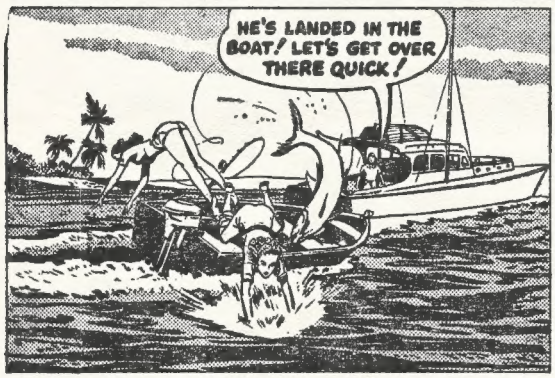
LEAPING TARPON STARTS THINGS MOVING



JERRY CANNON AND HIS BROTHER KIP ARE RETURNING TO PORT FROM A LONG DAY OF TROLLING FOR SAILFISH IN THE GULF STREAM. WHEN . . .



PICTURES? TAKE KIP HERE, BUT LEAVE ME OUT. I LOOK LIKE "BLACKBEARD THE PIRATE"
WHY NOT CLEAN UP IN THE CLUBHOUSE WHILE I GET MY CAMERA

SAY, THIS BLADE'S A HONEY! I'VE NEVER ENJOYED A QUICKER, SMOOTHER SHAVE
LOTS OF OUR MEMBERS USE THIN GILLETTES. THEY'RE REALLY KEEN

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◆ ◆ ◆ **THE FEBRUARY ISSUE WILL**

Adventure

(Registered U. S. Patent Office)

Vol. 118, No. 3 **for** **Best of New Stories**

January, 1948

THE NOVELETTE

Gunpowder and Glory ..... **R. W. DALY** 6

After five long years of fighting lobsterbacks in the line, young Jonathon Truscott, major on General Washington's staff, wondered why he had ever abandoned the sea. Now, at last, he had a chance to get back to salt water again—as Admiral de Grasse's pilot aboard His Most Christian Majesty Louis XVI's thirty-six gun frigate, *Amitié*. Of course, Louis' *Marine* was notoriously reluctant to engage the British fleet but, as pilot, perhaps Jonathon could steer the fleur-de-lis armada on a course where the command would have to be "Clear for action!"

SHORT STORIES

Time Trial ..... **COLEMAN MEYER** 39

Collison had hunched down in the cockpits of racing cars for twenty years and now his string was running out. From a high tide of big money and track records he'd drifted into a backwash of third and fourth places at fairground meets. . . . Now here he was, entered in the time trials to pick a test driver for Maguire Oil's 400 M.P.H. Special, with a chance to cop the hundred grand that went with the job. And just one guy in the race he wasn't sure he could beat —the Old Man with the Scythe.

Dynamite Detour ..... **C. HALL THOMPSON** 44

Weakened by the storm, one truss already gone, the Carson bridge was due to collapse at any minute—but the valley road, only alternate route for the four nitro-laden trucks, was washed out so there wasn't much choice. Farrell, Rinaldi and Doyle were ready to run the bridge but young Sand had a hunch he shouldn't try it. Doyle was the only one who didn't sneer at the kid's premonition—he understood—and offered to take his truck over for him. But that other bridge—the one inside Sand—no one could help him cross.

The Cautious Skipper ..... **ALBERT RICHARD WETJEN** 60

No one was more surprised than Captain Pearly when he was picked to command the de luxe liner *Saxon Prince* on her maiden voyage. Of course the Maizy Line appreciated Pearly's remarkable safety record but it was speed that was wanted this time—and unless the old sea dog could learn some new tricks it didn't look like the berth would be permanent. Still, it was the chance of a lifetime if—for once in his cautious career—the skipper could make up his mind to play it risky.

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BE OUT ON JANUARY 9TH ◆ ◆ ◆

The Buck at Cross Lake.....JIM KJELGAARD 68

Six months at the paper mill down at Binsanaba were all I could stand and I went home with my pay in my pocket—back to the woods to stay as long as I could carry my own duffel. That's when I got my first look at the Y buck over at Cross Lake. I shot my first deer when I was eight so there was no special reason to get excited about this one—but that's the way it was. I knew I'd never have any peace till his antlers were hanging over the fireplace.

Rugged Journey.....FRANKLIN GREGORY 76

Charles Jadwin, the transportation tycoon, had more innovations to his credit than a dozen R. R. Youngs but now he had a scheme to do away with *all* the petty annoyances of travel at one fell swoop. No more crowds, tickets, passports, reservations, waiting in line! The airplane had compressed space; Jadwin proposed to annihilate it. But it was Jadwin, unfortunately, who was annihilated. And only by a diplomatic miracle did Larry Gahagan, who knew the magnate's plan, survive to tell us the whole incredible tale, down at the Blue Pencil Club.

First Freeze.....STEVE FRAZEE 86

The richest placer he'd ever seen—that's what Old Dave had called it just before Sim Carney, the claim-jumper, had shot the veteran prospector and forced Young Bob to help him pan the gold. The kid knew he didn't have a chance—when the freeze came in a few days and stopped the water supply, Carney would kill him too before he left camp with the stolen nuggets—but Young Bob was determined to stay alive as long as he could. And just maybe he could figure out a plan . . .

THE SERIAL

Restricted! (2nd of 4 parts).....GEORGES SURDEZ 92

In which Bruce Kerrigan, former OSS officer, in search of peace and quiet in the Jura Mountains of France, finds himself involved in a small-scale war as deadly as the global one in which he had so recently served. Joining Dr. Sezille's group of ex-Resistance workers, who are probing the closely guarded secret of the "sanatorium" atop the mountain nearby, the American is picked to lead a daring sortie beyond the barb-wire-barricaded gates of that unofficial bastille of the Third Reich.

THE FACT STORY

Charles Dickens' Son—Indian-Fighter.....WILLIAM B. CAMERON 52

It was a far cry indeed from the book-lined study in foggy London where Dickens scrawled his immortal novels with a goose-quill pen—to the wind-swept plains of Saskatchewan where Inspector Francis Dickens of the North West Mounted Police, son of the famous author, led his little detachment of red-coated troopers against the Blackfeet hostiles in the Frog Lake Massacre.

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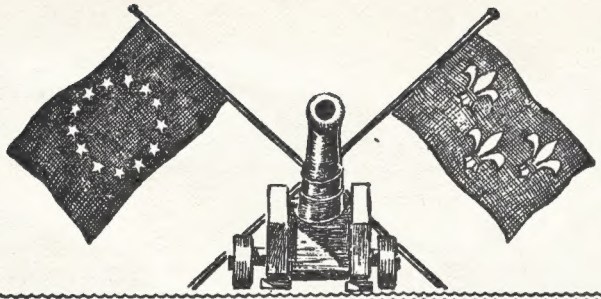
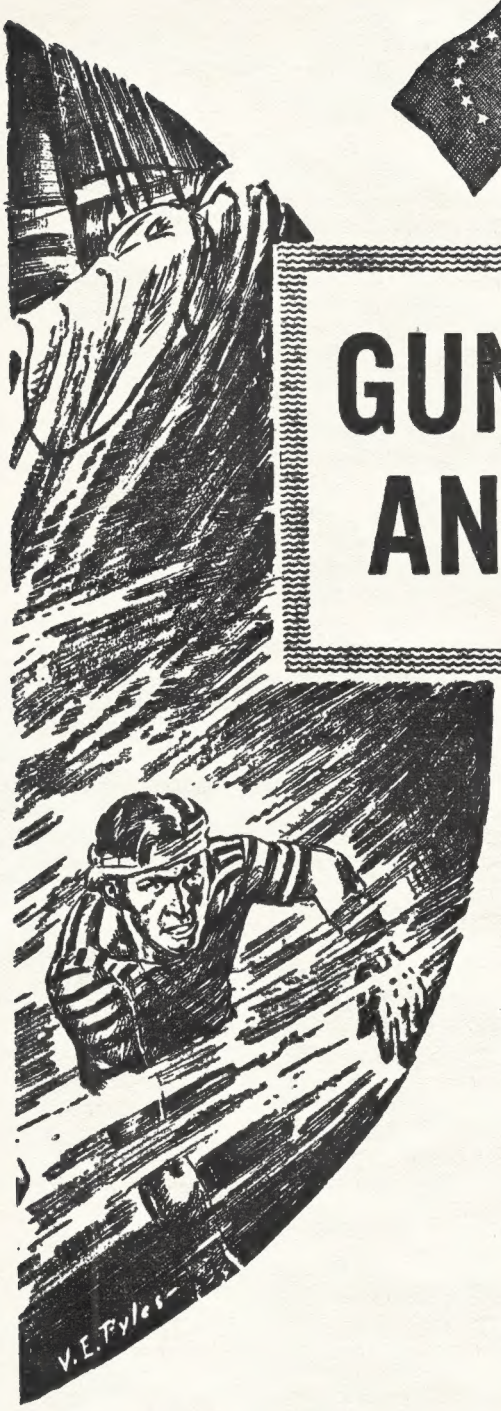
Cover painted for Adventure *by Rafael DeSoto*
Kenneth S. White, Editor

ILLUSTRATED BY
V. E. PYLES

A huge splinter, ripped from a spar, crashed onto the deck near Jonathon.



GUNPOWDER AND GLORY



SWEATING on a bed, Jonathon reluctantly glanced up as Colonel Warren entered. Having within the week traveled a trifle more than two hundred miles to Hartford, Jonathon had hoped to be able to rest while Generals Washington and Rochambeau mulled over their plans to attack the British entrenched at New York.

In deference to the heavy epaulettes adorning the colonel's blue coat, Jonathon hoisted himself up on an elbow, and watched his superior settle into the only comfortable chair in the hot little room. Warren sipped a glass of once-cool spring water, wiped his face with a handkerchief and smiled.

"The mail came," he said. "Any news from Mistress Deborah?"

Jonathon frowned. "She had to sell a schooner," he replied briefly.

"Ye're lucky to have something to sell," Colonel Warren remarked. "My mistress

By R. W. DALY

writes that my last pay scarcely bought a season's fuel, much less any food." He smiled wryly. "If only the Congress would print its money on cloth instead of paper, the women would have some use for it."

Jonathon said nothing. The Congress had come to be a target for all the ill-natured spleen in the thirteen colonies without the addition of ridicule from him. Suspecting correctly that Warren's visit was not social, he waited for the colonel to explain his business.

Warren accepted the dismissal of the topic, sighed, poured himself another glass of water, and said, obliquely, "I could never understand why you left a sailor's trade for this, Jonathon. Even a post on Washington's staff isn't worth the hardships of an infantryman's life."

Jonathon Truscott sat up. After some five years of fighting the lobsterbacks, he, too, had often wondered why he had abandoned the sea. While it was more patriotic to bear arms with General Washington, it would have been far more profitable to take out a privateer's commission. Often, Deborah had told him without apparent rancor about his Baltimore friends who were building fat fortunes from raids on British commerce. He didn't want to discuss it.

"What do you want, Sam?" he asked bluntly.

Sam Warren chuckled. His tall, quiet major had a way of speaking up. "So to business, then," he said. "What would you think of making a voyage?"

Jonathon settled back. "I'm tired, Sam. If you just want to talk, wait until tonight, will you?"

"This won't wait," Warren said. "Pack your gear. You ride this afternoon to Newport."

"Newport!" Jonathon exclaimed, fired by resentful astonishment. "That's a hundred miles, Sam!"

"Tsk!" Warren replied mildly. "It's only ninety." Sipping the water, he added casually, "At Newport you board the French frigate *Amitié*."

Jonathon scowled rebelliously, refusing to get off the bed. "Why?" he demanded.

"The general has ordered you to attend Admiral de Grasse as a pilot," Warren replied.

"Why?" persisted Jonathon.

"Because I recommended you," Colonel Warren said calmly. "We needed someone who knew the approaches to New York. Someone we could trust. We don't want a repetition of d'Estaing's fiasco. Naturally, I thought of you." He refused to look at his subordinate.

Jonathon was bitterly silent.

"De Grasse has a fleet," Warren said reasonably. "We cannot take New York without a fleet. Remember that, Jonathon."

"If d'Estaing refused to go in, what makes you think I might be able to persuade de Grasse to pass Sandy Hook?" Jonathon asked disgustedly. "The French are helping us only when they help themselves."

Warren shook his head. "Suppose," he said quietly, "suppose d'Estaing had gone in, defeated Howe, and forced the Narrows? You would have been home with Mistress Deborah a month thereafter. We all want to go home, Jonathon, and the French are now our only hope."

"We can win without them," Jonathon replied.

"Don't be foolish," Warren said sharply. "Throughout the entire land we have barely 14,000 Continentals; Clinton has more troops than that in New York alone."

Jonathon said nothing, sitting up and swinging his feet to the floor.

"Your nag seemed a bit lame," Warren said. "Take mine."

"Thanks," Jonathon said with exaggerated gratitude.

Warren rose to leave. "There's just a chance we may go south after Cornwallis instead of Clinton," he remarked. "If we should, and we pass through Baltimore, I'll call on Mistress Deborah."

Jonathon was mutinously silent. He had little use for the French. Not after d'Estaing's failure to pluck New York off the silver platter on which it had been held out to him. He had nothing to say about this mission.

"Good luck," Warren said uncomfortably, and left.

THE next day, hard-driven beast tottering beneath him, Jonathon clattered into the old shipping town of Rhode Island colony. He had often sailed into the harbor, for prior to the war Newport had a

larger trade than bustling New York, and was famous throughout the New World. With a soldier's hardened eye, he saw, unmoved, the ruined houses left desolate by the British occupation. He was ignored by the brightly uniformed French troops who swaggered like conquerors about the town. In Newport, they cut fine figures. He wondered how they would look after the forthcoming campaign.

Riding onto the Parade, he briefly watched a company of the Soissonais drill, and then went down to the Market, where, moored to Long Wharf, His Most Christian Majesty's thirty-six gun frigate *Amitié* basked in the hot June sun, rigging and spars aswarm with seamen readying her for swift passage to the Indies.

Accosted by an American picket at the head of the wharf, he dismounted, gave the lieutenant in charge the task of returning Warren's horse, and stalked with his saddlebags up to the frigate's brow. A pair of white-uniformed French marines presented arms, making him conscious of his garments. So far as appearance went, he was a poor representative of an Army, but proudly, he wouldn't exchange a regiment of the Maryland Line for a battalion of the best European professionals. This attitude, while not realistic, enabled him to hold shoulders back and head high as he stepped onto the brow and returned the salute of the marines.

Memories of sea-faring days were stirred by the smell of damp decks when he walked through the entryport into the *Amitié's* waist. Dusty boots marked his path across her freshly holystoned deck. While a messenger hunted up an officer, Jonathon appraised what he could see of the ship. Critically looking for those details which to a sailor mark the difference between a taut captain and incompetency, he concluded that the *Amitié* was well commanded. Hard though he tried to find something adrift, he did not observe a single English pennant. Everything was in place, lines were coiled, stays and shrouds were well served, blocks were clean and greased, guns and shot were polished. Indeed, the *Amitié* was in far better condition than any ship he had ever commanded.

A short, hatless, shirted officer approached him.

"Welcome, Monsieur Truscott," he said warmly, in English whose trace of Yankee accent bespoke liberties ashore. "I am de Rosilleaux, *Second Capitaine.*"

"Enchanté, Monsieur," Jonathon murmured.

"You speak French?" exclaimed de Rosilleaux. *"Bien!"*

Jonathon neither explained that there were French in Baltimore nor that he had traded at Martinique and Guadeloupe. "My credentials, Monsieur," he said, holding out his papers.

De Rosilleaux tucked them into his waistband. "Come, Monsieur, I will show you to our quarters. We sail on the evening tide, and you can rest until supper." He snapped his fingers, and a seaman picked up the battered saddlebags. "After me, please."

Between decks, Jonathon's nostrils winced at the tang of vinegar with which the French sought to disinfect their ship of Newport contamination. In the days before the Revolution, he had been aboard British men-of-war, and was, therefore, surprised by the *Amitié's* spaciousness. He did not have to stoop. The French transferred their taste for gracious living into their vessels, refusing to crowd cannon and men into a hull, with the result that class for class their ships were larger than the British.

"Here," de Rosilleaux said, pulling back a portiere, "you will stay with me."

Truscott entered a stateroom which, on an English frigate, would have been big enough for the captain's cabin. De Rosilleaux actually slept in a bed. The furniture could have ornamented a chateau. The stateroom lacked only a fireplace to be a home away from home, and the squat twelve-pounder gun lashed to deck and framing was incongruous.

"This is only a frigate," de Rosilleaux apologized, "else I could offer you comfort."

Mindful of the stark furnishings of the cramped ships which he had owned and sailed, Jonathon sank into a tapestried armchair. "It will do," he said ironically.

A seaman knocked at the door frame, and came in, bearing an armful of clothes. De Rosilleaux had them laid on the bed. "We cannot wait for your luggage, Monsieur. I trust you will not be offended if we offer you the use of our third lieuten-

ant's wardrobe. He is almost of your size."

Beguiled by the delicacy with which de Rosilleaux offered him replacement for his war-torn linen and suitable clothing for his position, Jonathon accepted. After a glass or two of wine, together with explanations of ship routine, de Rosilleaux departed to continue the job of cleaning ship.

JONATHON gratefully stripped, eased his length onto the bed, and slept. He was awakened by a shifting of the ship which told his subconscious that she had heeled to the wind and was underway. Quickly, he got up and dressed, sensually pleased by a clean silk shirt, and scurried topside.

The *Amitié* was handled without confusion. As she slipped past the tip of Conanicut Island and entered the open sea, her captain transmitted his commands through the lungs of de Rosilleaux. In silence, the *Amitié* obeyed. Men carried out a command and returned on the run to their stations. Jonathon was astounded by their precise snap. Having been reared in a tradition of British prejudice, he had always considered the French as suited best to the element of land.

Noting his presence, de Rosilleaux beckoned. Jonathon went to the mizzen, where he was introduced to the captain. De Marchantel was a round-faced, sturdy, brusque Gascon, who wasted little time on anything which lacked either a logical or a justifiable purpose. He was obeyed in his ship because disobedience was certain to result in an ingenious punishment. M. le Baron de Marchantel could devise with his nimble mind more effective deterrents to sloth and crime than the simple crudeness of the lash.

"You will assist M. de Rosilleaux in navigation," the captain announced, thereby disposing of Jonathon's time during the passage. "You will correct our coastal charts. You will sit on my left at table, and in action take station with me here on the quarterdeck. Any questions? None? Then we will meet at supper." He turned to de Rosilleaux, who was discreetly grinning nearby. "Set the watch, Monsieur," he ordered, and went below.

Jonathon stared after the pepperpot. He had not seen such an aristocratic individual since Alexander Hamilton had inspected their regiment.

"The captain is a little brisk," de Rosilleaux said comfortingly. "Come. I will show you the chartroom."

When the *Amitié* reached the latitude of Hatteras, Jonathon had been almost charmed out of his truculent hostility towards the French both by the amiability of de Rosilleaux and the perfection of the *Amitié's* operation underway. He even went so far as to discuss the rejuvenation of the Marine Française.

De Rosilleaux was candid about his service. "We lost Canada and our influence in India because of a mismanaged Marine. The Duc de Choiseul undertook to correct the situation. The results of our work you will see with de Grasse."

Jonathon expressed an appropriate hope that neither of them would be disappointed, and then, although de Rosilleaux could not appreciate the extent of friendship which made Jonathon able to speak, asked for the French attitude towards d'Estaing's campaign in America.

De Rosilleaux ignored the fragile subject. "Everyone in France," he said, "everyone from the highest to the lowest supported the Duke. Money and reforms produced ships and a service which the English have never before met. Someday, perhaps this summer, we will regain through the fleet what we lost to a fleet."

"And what of d'Estaing?" Jonathon persisted unkindly.

De Rosilleaux looked at him. "D'Estaing, *mon ami,* drove the English from your northern colonies. Why, if not through fear of him, did they abandon Philadelphia and Newport and Boston? Our fleet will yet win this war for you, and something for France besides."

Truscott had to admit that the British had indeed abandoned those towns, but noted de Rosilleaux's reluctance to discuss the failure to sail into New York. By environment, he had acquired sufficient courtesy not to embarrass his new friend, and instead urged de Rosilleaux to speak further about the Marine Française.

"This war," de Rosilleaux continued, plainly relieved by the dismissal of controversy, "this is a test of our sharpened sword. We are holding our own with the British. We do have still a few customs which weaken the service. Our officers are

all nobles, even though the Breton folk are superb sailormen, and would make excellent captains. Again, since we are all nobles, the lowliest *enseigne* may challenge his superiors. These things are bad, but they do not affect the *Amitié*."

Jonathon could understand why. Although by custom, de Marchantel ate at the same table with his subordinates, no one ever forgot he was the *capitaine*. Through such enforced familiarity, a weaker man might lose respect and discipline, but de Marchantel held the *Amitié* in the palm of his hand by force of personality.

DE ROSILLEAUX'S technical knowledge constantly amazed Jonathon. The Frenchman completely understood and used the new scientific navigation. Jonathon, who had gone to sea in the rough and ready school of dead reckoning and shrewd guesses, was often abashed by the complexity with which de Rosilleaux calculated the *Amitié's* track, and was grateful for opportunities to show his own special skills, chiefly in the matter of charts. Those of the American coast were exceedingly inaccurate, and he was able to rectify several serious omissions, despite the years he had been absent from the sea. He was in fact beginning to feel like a sailor again when the captain stopped by one afternoon to see how the work was progressing.

De Marchantel was not impressed. "Monsieur," he said, after examining a chart, "we do not have much time. Let us use it well. You say you are a native of Baltimore? *Bien*. Forget New York. Apply yourself to the charts of the Chesapeake, which is the area you know best. A perfect chart is worth a thousand which are imperfect."

"As you wish, Monsieur," Jonathon said stiffly. He had, indeed, been guessing here and there, trusting that instinct which served American skippers so well. Even though his knowledge of New York was five years old, which was a long time wherein the ocean could play tricks with the shallows of Sandy Hook, he was irritated by de Marchantel's reproof. A little tact would have made the lesson more palatable.

He was sulking when de Rosilleaux returned from an inspection of ship's work. The sensitive Frenchman had come to know his bunkmate well enough to be aware of his anger, and soon had the story.

"Well," de Rosilleaux said debonairly, "we can do as the captain orders, or you can tell me more about your wife. Which do you prefer?"

Jonathon picked up a pen. "Work," he said grimly.

"She must be *magnifique*, your wife," said de Rosilleaux enviously. "You are so eager for her. Myself, I do not care when I return to mine."

They did not, however, correct charts that afternoon. The drum sent them flying topside.

In addition to being perpetually rough, the waters off Hatteras were a concourse for ships sailing to and from the Indies. It was almost impossible to pass over its shoals without encountering at least one vessel. The *Amitié's* lookout had sighted a full-rigged ship, which, heading north, would pass to port. She was just on the horizon, and a slight course change would bring her bows on.

De Rosilleaux busied himself with the bearing circle at the compass. Before the stranger had moved the top of her bulwark down to the line of the horizon, he predicted that she would pass about a mile and a quarter to port. Jonathon was disturbed. When he had wanted to speak a sail, he had merely pointed his jibboom at her, changing course as often as was necessary to keep aimed. Predicting distance off a landmark was one thing, and off a moving ship, another.

With his glass, de Marchantel silently watched the stranger, and did not alter course. A quartermaster thoughtfully offered Jonathon a telescope, and thus brought him to the captain's notice. "British," de Marchantel said. "Note the cut of her topsails."

Jonathon was suddenly tense. If the stranger was British, then there would be a fight. Except for a few skirmishes with pirates, he had never been in a battle at sea. He glanced around the quarterdeck, whose gunners stood like rammers beside their six-pounders. Below, on the gundeck, the *Amitié's* main battery was being readied. He was impressed by the steadiness with which the French faced a passage of arms. He knew how long it had taken

for the Continental Line to achieve that stolidity. These men did not seem to be of the same race who, under d'Estaing, had failed to contest the entrance to New York with my lord Howe.

The stranger came near enough for him to ascertain that she was a sloop-of-war, corresponding to a French corvette. His tension slackened. A sloop would be easy prey for the *Amitié*. The struggle would be brief.

"Certainly," de Marchantel remarked, when Truscott helpfully announced his opinion. "She has twenty-four guns, probably sixes."

Jonathon tried to guess de Marchantel's tactics. Although the sloop had an easterly position, she was not in full possession of the wind, not when the *Amitié* was such an excellent sailer. In his American simplicity, Jonathon would have beaten to windward, headed off the sloop, and thereby forced her to stand and fight. De Marchantel held steady to course and speed.

As the moments passed, Jonathon's speculations slowly changed to doubt. De Marchantel was losing control of the situation, and did not appear in the least disturbed.

Then the *Amitié* was no longer able to check the sloop. Puzzled, Jonathon wondered if de Marchantel wanted to waste time in a stern chase. Even this became more of a task when the sloop, evidently sighting the lilies snapping over the *Amitié's* rail, abruptly clawed to the east. Imperturbably, de Marchantel watched her go. Jonathon was impatient for the orders to the helmsman to take up the chase.

Orders did not come.

De Marchantel snapped shut his glass. "Secure," he said to de Rosilleaux. "Resume the watch."

Jonathon stood agape. Deliberately, de Marchantel had let a sloop escape, a sloop which he could have gobbled up without a struggle. It was d'Estaing and Howe all over again on a smaller scale. In combined amazement and disgust, he saw de Marchantel calmly go below. At one stroke, his kind thoughts about the French were destroyed.

Abeam to port, the British sloop gratefully scuttled away.

"Well," Jonathon said sarcastically to de Rosilleaux, "we had a narrow escape!"

"Oui," agreed the Frenchman peacefully, and continued about his business of returning the *Amitié* to cruising condition.

Left alone on the quarterdeck, Truscott sorrowfully studied the sloop until she was hull down in the darkling fringe of the east. Then, as the smells of cooking came up from the waist hatches, he returned the telescope to a quartermaster, and went to his quarters.

CHAPTER II

THE SQUADRONS OF DE GRASSE

HE DID not go that evening to the *carré des officiers* for supper that evening. He was not in the mood for rationalizing about the sloop. He had battled for so many years on the side of inferior numbers, he was anguished by the passing of an opportunity to be behind superior weight of metal.

His attitude was not improved when the captain thoughtfully had supper sent in to him.

Solitary in the midst of foreigners, Jonathon allowed himself to brood. He bitterly recalled the surge of hope which had lifted the spirit of the Continental Army when Congress announced the signing of an alliance with France. The prestige of King Louis had been high in 1778. Then, during the following year, while the worn Americans awaited great things from their powerful ally, d'Estaing had refused to take New York, had failed Sullivan at Newport, been outmaneuvered by the British in the Indies, and had dashed American hopes by a willful, fruitless assault upon Savannah. In actual combat, d'Estaing had accomplished nothing.

The failure at New York had given the British freedom to act as they wished in the North; the disaster at Savannah had left the Southern Colonies open to conquest. Far from improving the American cause, Jonathon was persuaded that French intervention was a catastrophe. He had known many men in Lincoln's surrendered Army. The Colonies were near financial exhaustion, regiments mutinied, there were no supplies, the British seemingly moved where they would.

In the summer of 1780, six thousand

troops under Rochambeau arrived and stayed at Newport. Their coming once again raised American hopes, as Washington expected to be able to take New York, but for nearly a year Rochambeau did nothing but treat his officers and men to Yankee hospitality. Now Rochambeau was ready to act, but de Grasse, who had convoyed the troops from Brest, had leisurely refitted and then gone to fight the real war in the Indies. There de Grasse was advancing the interests of Louis, but hardly those of the Colonials.

Despairing, Jonathon absorbed himself in the charts, finding in those familar lines and numbers sufficient memories of better days to assuage his discontent. He was sick of the war. The cause of independence demanded unlimited expenditures of irretrievable time and opportunity. No one grew rich in the Army, and he thought with longing of the freedom and luck of privateer skippers who could sail when they wished, lingering ashore to their hearts' content.

With the French committed to their own program of self-aggrandizement, with the American War only their pretext for attacking Great Britain, he began to see the cause of independence doomed either to stalemate and compromise, or defeat and retribution.

"How can there be victory?" he asked himself in the loneliness of the *Amitié*.

When, some two degrees north of Cuba, the *Amitié* fell in with and ran away from a British frigate, he was not surprised. He expected nothing better from *Capitaine de vaisseau de Marchantel*. He expected nothing at all from the French.

HOVE to off Cap Français, waiting for the land breeze to shift to the north so that she might enter the dangerous channel, the *Amitié* avoided the shoals which could rip out her coppered bottom. All hands were at battle stations, for British frigates had an unhealthy habit of attempting to surprise ships working to gain the protection of France's West Indian Paris, and de Marchantel had small desire to be overwhelmed within gunshot of his destination.

The heights which sloped down to the sea to enclose the western side of the roadstead formed an excellent platform for the batteries of Fort Picolet. Cap Français was deceptively open to attack. Actually, Jonathon knew, the roadstead was one of the strongest refuges in the Caribbean, for big ships entering had to follow a single channel which brought them almost within pistol-shot of Picolet. The narrowness of the channel compelled ships to sail in single file, and this put them utterly at the mercy of the Fort. Such enemies as Picolet did not completely shatter had to sustain the fire of more batteries along the shore, before they came into the anchorage.

With considerable ill humor, Jonathon wondered why the cautious de Marchantel did not kedge their way into the security of Cap Français. The crew and officers grew more tense with each hour of tossing idly about the shoals outside of the channel. Anxious eyes patrolled the sea horizon, but no enemy appeared. A few merchantmen, come to receive convoy protection for the voyage to Brest, slipped to within range of the *Amitié*, obviously comforted by having reached at last the tacit protection of a French man-of-war.

During the watch, de Rosilleaux attempted to talk to Jonathon, but the American was too disgruntled to be sociable. Jonathon stood silently on the quarterdeck, studying the sun from time to time as he calculated the nearness to the first dog watch and a favorable wind. He was as eager as the *Amitié's* crew to enter the harbor. They, of course, anticipated a possible liberty ashore amidst the beauties of a town notorious for its mulatto women; he thought only of leaving the *Amitié*.

The strain of waiting shortened tempers. When, at last, the wind enabled the *Amitié* to round Fort Picolet, Capitaine de Marchantel mounted the mizzen chain to get a good view of the harbor. With intense Gallic anger, he turned and shouted down to de Rosilleaux: "*La Concorde* is there!"

For his part, de Rosilleaux cursed, setting an example for the officers and crew. A division of ships-of-the-line were in, and the *Amitié* moved to an anchorage designated by the senior officer present. With great address, the *Amitié* glided to her anchorage, backed sail, dropped her best bower, and veered cable until she swung in precisely the position desired by the

commander of His Most Christian Majesty's eighty-gun ship *Languedoc.*

Jonathon was aware of the hatred in the glances which the *Amitié's* men shot from time to time at another frigate, and would have liked to know the cause of such animosity. He was ignored, however, in the bustle whereby the *Amitié* was secured from sea, and after his days of aloofness did not feel quite able to interrupt de Rosilleaux's activities for an explanation.

He remained on the quarterdeck, knowing from experience that it would be physically intolerable below until sunset. Thus he saw de Marchantel going to the *Languedoc,* and the ship's boats, in charge of the junior *enseigne,* going ashore for water and fresh meat. When the frigate had quieted into a routine watch, Jonathon yielded to his curiosity and asked a friendly quartermaster why the presence of *La Concorde* was so disturbing.

"She is from Boston, Monsiuer," the man replied. "She must have sailed with duplicates of our dispatches. Had we only known!" He interrupted himself profanely. "Had we known, we would have had the prize money of a corvette and frigate!"

Jonathon was ashamed of himself, seeing at once both the anger of de Marchantel and his own stupidity. Naturally, a dispatch ship could not pause for or risk the dangers of a fight. He should have realized that, and have understood that the captain of such an able ship would have little cause to dread the outcome of an engagement. He could fully appreciate the deflation with which the *Concorde* had been discovered at anchor.

Without a word, he went below to find de Rosilleaux.

By the time de Marchantel returned from the *Languedoc,* Jonathon had healed the breach with the French, and was amicably helping de Rosilleaux compile a list of needed repairs. The pair stood by the entryport to welcome the captain back aboard his command. De Marchantel's sharp eye noted the change in Jonathon's manner, and without comment, the captain invited both to join him at the table and chairs set upon the quarterdeck under a hastily rigged awning.

"There is no news of the admiral," de Marchantel said, accepting a lemon mash from his steward.

"Did the *Concorde* . . . ?" de Rosilleaux asked casually.

"Yes!" de Marchantel replied, making a curse of the monosyllable. "Yes!"

De Rosilleaux looked away at the tumbling mountains of Santo Domingo. "The letters must be important," he said.

"Yes!" de Marchantel said, waved his hand, and dismissed the subject. "You, *mon ami,*" he remarked to Jonathon, "have my fullest sympathy. *La Concorde* is loaded to the tops with Yankee pilots, enough, I swear, for every ship and boat in the Marine."

JONATHON gaped, as the words sank in. His troubles, then, like the *Amitié's,* had been useless. *La Concorde* was in all ways the true messenger of Washington and Rochambeau, while the *Amitié* was merely a substitute. He felt he had been betrayed by Colonel Warren. He excused himself on the pretext of going to the chartroom to complete his work.

After a time, de Rosilleaux came to talk to him.

"The captain said you could go aboard *La Concorde* to be with your countrymen," de Rosilleaux reported.

"Do I have a choice?" Jonathon asked.

"But of course!"

"I would rather remain with you," Jonathon said bitterly. "You will probably return to Newport with duplicate dispatches from de Grasse. I'd be out of place over there. I want to rejoin my regiment as soon as possible."

De Rosilleaux nodded sympathetically. "We all thought we were heroes, Jonnie." He turned to leave. "By the way," he added, "the captain requests that you accompany him ashore this evening. He dines with the governor."

Thus, between the pleasures of the town and the details of voluntarily assisting de Rosilleaux, the time passed quickly. Jonathon met a few of the Yankee pilots ashore. They looked with either resentment or wonder at the elegant uniform which a handyman on the *Amitié* had made for him, but did not ask him how a Continental major came to be accepted in the liveliest circles of Cap Français. They drank their rum, fondled the local belles, and somnolently waited for the call to action. They did not discuss the war with

him, for a Continental major obviously would know nothing of such things. They wished to have nothing to do with him, and Jonathon did not sue for their friendship. As the best of a bad situation, he was satisfied with the *Amitié*.

With de Rosilleaux, he was bending over a chart of Sandy Hook late one afternoon, indulging peacefully in the perennial argument that d'Estaing could have found plenty of water to reach my lord Howe. The argument was ended by the quick report of a messenger.

"Fleet in sight, messieurs!"

Like midshipmen, both officers dashed out on deck and raced up the ratlines to the maintop. Breathless, Jonathon stared out to sea as de Grasse rounded Fort Picolet. Leisurely, through blue waters under a blue sky, some two dozen powerful ships-of-the-line sailed into the channel, preceded by the swift frigates of the scouting line.

All the talk of a lifetime could not have produced upon Jonathon an effect equal to actually seeing de Grasse's squadrons. He almost shared the tears of pride which slipped from the corners of de Rosilleaux's eyes. There before them, beyond the capacity of an American's provincial imagination, was a magnificent force built out of defeat by the drive and blood and toil of a nation which was determined not to accept the loss of an empire and subservience to British economics.

There were some of the ships but few of the leaders who had surrendered dominion of the sea to England. Here were captains who had, at the demand of their people, striven to earn the right to hold command. They maneuvered their ships with confident skill in the treacherous channel, those ships whose combined batteries might break the back of British sea power.

As the big ships came into the roadstead and anchored, Jonathon admired the manner in which, through seeming confusion, they finally formed a line well-nigh impregnable to assault. De Rosilleaux turned to him. "You see the salvation of America," he said quietly.

Jonathon did not answer. In those ships there were more men than Washington had ever commanded. These men would serve the Colonies with reservations, but reservations or not, in their hands the ships became the mighty lever which could pry King George away from the rebels. Jonathon was compelled to admit that so long as the Royal Navy was uncontested, the suppression of the Rebellion was a matter of time. While redcoats were carried by sea to outflank Washington's troops, transports poured supplies into British quartermaster depots, and cruisers strangled Colonial commerce.

Indeed, Jonathon's scorn for d'Estaing arose from his appreciation of America's need for the help of a Navy. D'Estaing's blundering had been a cruel disappointment of high hopes. Now de Grasse had come to break a lance. Jonathon was persuaded to be open-minded in his judgment of this new champion, although he knew in his bones that this was absolutely the last hope for victory. If de Grasse proved to be another d'Estaing, the Colonies were lost. They could not resist until another year brought a fighting Frenchman to their aid. This was it.

De Rosilleaux touched his arm. "I must go. The captain will want me."

Jonathon followed de Rosilleaux below, and learned that the captain wanted him to report with him to the admiral.

So, before sunset, Jonathon entered the presence of Fançois Joseph Paul Comte de Grasse-Tilly, in the great cabin of the hundred gun *Ville de Paris*. He found that de Grasse had no delusions about the importance of a Colonial officer. Jonathon's interview was over a moment after it began. De Marchantel mentioned the work on Chesapeake Bay charts, de Grasse wearily asked that they be delivered to his aides, and dismissed Jonathon to the care of a staff officer, who, aping his senior, wearily glanced at a sheet of paper, and directed Jonathon to transfer himself as expeditiously as possible to the seventy-four gun *Ixion*.

Dazed, Jonathon then found himself once more beneath the open sky. He groped to regain his bearings. Since discovering the *Concorde*, he had assumed that his orders had been completed, freeing him to return with the *Amitié* to Newport. He had tolerated the wait for de Grasse only by assuring himself that his services were superfluous, and he would be released to return to the Army. Now he was included in the assignment of pilots.

He showed his consternation when de Rosilleaux walked up to him. "Apparently the admiral—"

"He knows about you, Jonnie. De Marchantel asked to have you left with us. The admiral said no, you were needed."

Jonathon looked at the anchored fleet, completely unable to speak.

"I am sorry indeed you go to the *Ixion,*" de Rosilleaux said softly. "Her *Second* is not an amiable man." He started to give reasons for his opinion.

"I don't give a damn if he eats sulphur for breakfast!" Jonathon burst out.

De Rosilleaux stared at him. "You must beware of this de Tasigny," he persisted.

"Very well," Jonthan replied wryly. "Have we any bottles left?"

"Do not fear," de Rosilleaux smiled, relieved by the change in mood. "The captain promises you a proper *congé!*"

And de Marchantel was as good as his word.

Second Capitaine de Tasigny

CHAPTER III

A LESSON IN FRENCH

JONATHON stood at the bulwark of His Most Christian Majesty's Ship *Ixion,* looking with a lackadaisical eye upon the activity which disturbed the drowsiness of Cap Français. The mighty two-deckers, fresh from triumph at Tobago and unvanquished in duels with Rodney and Hood, strained impatiently at cables while Admiral de Grasse meditated in his cabin about his answer to the proposals of Washington and Rochambeau.

Seamen broiled as they overhauled their ships after the winter's campaign. The little bay rang with their shouts and curses. Pestilence was beginning to lay its usual heavy hand upon their ranks, and so they were eager to be gone to a healthier clime, thus putting more energy into their labor than their officers usually expected.

Jonathon was disinterested in the bustle. From the first, he had been accorded cold courtesy on the *Ixion.* He received the due of his rank. Her captain observed the formalities of placing him to his left at table, and of berthing him with the second-in-command, who was absent ashore, but the *Ixion's* captain assigned him no duties. Jonathon was given to understand that he was merely a passenger, useless and unwanted. Any conversation he had endeavored to start had become vague and studiously colorless. The French in the *Ixion* dealt with their intruder like an oyster protecting itself against an invading grain of sand, by first neutralizing and then living in spite of it.

For the first time, Jonathon fully tasted exile. Everyone in a ship has something to do, even a captain. No one had words for him. His maiden afternoon, alone in his quarters, he had written a long letter to Deborah, and tried to keep from hating Colonel Warren. The heat had finally driven him on deck, where, save for occasional, amused stares from seamen, he was ignored. He knew that his Army uniform was not incongruous aboard a Frenchman, for many of their commanders had been transformed by King Louis in mid-career from soldiers to sailors. He felt that the amusement resulted from his nationality. Few of the seamen had seen Americans.

He was not, accordingly, in a good frame of mind when a stir on deck attracted his attention. Seamen scurried to receive a boat. Idly, he strolled over to the bulwark to see who was mounting the ladder, and knew at first glimpse that it was *Second Capitaine* de Tasigny come from settling the *Ixion's* business ashore.

De Tasigny was a tall, broad-shouldered, impoverished Breton noble who followed the sea as a family heritage. Jonathon had learned from de Rosilleaux that the Breton was not only belligerent by nature, but hated all Americans as well. Doomed by fortune to remain below flag rank, de Tasigny was proud, sensitive to any criticism or slight from his countrymen. As for the Americans, during the late war, a Norfolk privateer had captured a ship loaded with a cargo bought with the bulk of the de Tasigny fortunes in a gamble whereby the Breton family hoped to gain sufficient wealth to restore the glory of their name. The gamble had failed, thanks to an American captain, and de Tasigny was manifestly unable to forget the blow which had not only ruined his father but ruined his own career as well.

Jonathon hastened below to await an introduction from which he hoped to retrieve something from the fiasco which had resulted from his trip to Cap Français. He was anxious to make at least a speaking acquaintance out of de Tasigny, despite de Rosilleaux's forebodings, because, if for no other reason, he was to live for an unknown number of weeks or months with the man. He was ready, then, to meet de Tasigny more than halfway.

No one performed the introduction.

In time, de Tasigny entered the stateroom, pulled off his uniform coat, and stared at Jonathon. "I trust you have made yourself comfortable," he said, with caustic hauteur, after his black eyes had darted in an insulting survey of his furniture. "You seem to have done so."

Jonathon withdrew his proffered hand. He gazed at the lean, angry features of his involuntary host. He had been prepared to hold down his American pride in favor of a pleasant relationship, but he sensed that de Tasigny was not a man to compromise even for comfort. After the *Concorde,* the pilots, de Grasse, de Tasigny's attitude was too much. "I assure you, Monsieur," he said coldly, "I have appropriated nothing except a few sheets of paper and a drop of ink." He drew a goldpiece from his pocket and flung it on the escritoire. "That will reimburse you."

Coolly, de Tasigny slipped the gold into a drawer. "Your orders, Monsieur?" he asked insolently.

Jonathon saw that the Breton, for all his calm, had a temper at white heat, but Jonathon was no longer in a conciliatory mood. De Tasigny needed a hard clip on the jaw, and Jonathon ached to give it to him. He had held out his hand in friendship and his hand had been disdainfully disregarded. The developing quarrel was not his responsibility. He had been given no choice of quarters aboard the *Ixion,* nor had he asked for favors. De Tasigny, the moment their eyes met, was antagonistic; the consequences would be on his head.

Taking measure, they stared at each other. De Tasigny broke the impasse with a short laugh. "You will pardon me, Major," he said politely. "I would change my clothes."

Jonathon bowed slightly and went topside. He was as nonplussed as he was angry. He could not have cherished an old injury to his father as one to himself. He had believed de Rosilleaux had exaggerated. Now he faced the reality: not only did de Tasigny feel that a Continental major was far below his rank, de Tasigny treated Americans in a manner certain to have only one outcome.

"Damn his eyes," Jonathon muttered. "I should have hit him!" Then, topside, with seamen bustling about, reason slowly displaced his anger, as he saw that de Tasigny would not miss an opportunity to turn a blow into a duel to the death. Dueling was still fashionable in America as well as the Old World, and few men had the courage to refuse challenges. Jonathon believed in the utility of fists rather than pistols, because Deborah thought a man foolish to risk his life except in a noble cause.

THUS, that evening, when Jonathon returned to the stateroom, he sought at least a passive tolerance with his irritable roommate. He found de Tasigny directing a

boatswain in the slinging of a hammock. "I'm a fore and aft sailor, Monsieur," Jonathon remarked in a manner which flew a flag of truce. "If you rig that athwartships, ye'll pitch me out on deck."

De Tasigny looked at him suavely. "And I, Major, am an athwartships sailor, if you don't mind."

"Monsieur," Jonathon said reasonably, "I really prefer to lie along the keel."

"In that case, Major," de Tasigny replied, "it will be simple to shift and relash the bed."

"The bed?"

"Where else, Major?" de Tasigny asked humbly. "I can at least give an honored soldier my poor bed."

Jonathon was not deceived by the mock courtesy, but refused, for the sake of his pride, to launch a dispute while a boatswain could hear. His conciliatory mood evaported. Fuming, he sat at the escritoire, and ignored the whole proceedings, which de Tasigny prolonged until the boatswain had adjusted and readjusted the hammock to the Breton's entire satisfaction. When the boatswain had gone, Jonathon promptly reopened the conversation.

"If you don't mind," he said, "I prefer the hammock."

De Tasigny favored him with a smile that indicated such a preference was to be expected of a barbarian. He did not argue. "Very well," he said amicably, "if that is your command, Major, I am your humble servant."

That evening, Jonathon had difficulty in getting to sleep.

By lunch the following noon, he had scarcely swallowed his irritation over the incident, when he made the mistake of asking a steward for a second serving of oranges. His French made little impression on the steward, who smirkingly requested a repetition. Across the table, de Tasigny intervened.

"The major wants more food—get it!" His voice spoke with the weight of the lash he could inflict, and the steward ducked into the pantry.

Jonathon was obliged to express thanks for an action which made him the momentary center of discussion below decks. "*Merci,* Monsieur," he murmured. "It seems I do not speak your tongue as well as I thought."

"But no, Major!" de Tasigny quickly protested. "You speak our language very well for—" he paused significantly, and concluded carelessly— "for one not born in France."

The implications of the pause were not lost either upon Jonathon or the ship's officers, most of whom openly smiled approval of such a tactful chastening of an upstart American. Thereafter Jonathon ate and drank what was placed before him, and asked for nothing.

In a score of similar ways, de Tasigny continued to make Jonathon remember that he was a foreigner, of people who had gone begging in the world for help. Jonathon came to see too clearly how the revolting colonies appeared in the eyes of the nations, and slowly the vision determined his future. Upon completing his mission with the French, he proposed to quit the Army, take out a privateer's letter of marque, and make some money.

He calculated that with French concern for French interests, the war was bound to continue long enough for both France and himself to realize a profit from the hostilities. General Clinton was firmly installed in New York, from which, as a base, the British were spreading their power through the Southern colonies, abandoning aggressive warfare in the North in favor of getting a firm grip upon Virginia, the Carolines and Georgia. General Cornwallis was successfully laying the foundations of a second Canada. Jonathon did not believe that either Clinton or Cornwallis would be seriously molested by the French fleet, unless high reasons of state dictated such an attack.

He well knew that Washington wanted to root out the British power in New York, because, wih Clinton taken and de Grasse upon the coast, Cornwallis would be left to wither in a hostile land. The years which the British had spent in building a great citadel upon the island of Manhattan, would, according to Washington, be a blessing, for the capture of New York would demoralize the administration, supply, and existence of the British Army.

Alone, Washington could not achieve this great end. United with the French, he could. For this he had tolerated the delays of Rochambeau. For this, he had requested de Grasse to isolate New York

from the support of the Royal Navy. Realistically, Jonathon did not believe that de Grasse would prove to be the needed decisive factor. De Grasse had not completed his own plans of conquest in the Indies, and would not favor an end to the war. Like d'Estaing, he would yield to considerations of policy.

Thus, the disillusioned Jonathon could not see an early peace, unless Clinton abruptly realized the British hope of wearing the rebels down to submission. De Grasse would merely demonstrate, and then in season hurry back to the Caribbean, the true battlefield of French strategy. If de Grasse were sincerely concerned with American success, Jonathon did not see how he could loiter at Cap Français, and so, Jonathon felt little shame in planning to look after his own interests. He had not lost faith in the American cause. He still believed in the righteousness of the Revolution. He had merely determined to learn a lesson from the French, and mend his own fences.

He was bitter, and the bitterness grew, as day after day the fleet lay idle. De Grasse ostensibly had to lay his plans, though he could have been suspected of enjoying the honors showered upon him by the pretty belles of Cap Français.

EACH day followed the same pattern. Save for meals, Jonathon remained in the stateroom until even his will had to yield to the heat which urged him on deck. Topside, he stationed himself in the mizzen fighting top, and would stare longingly at the *Amitié* for a while. She had moved tantalizingly to within a few hundred yards. De Rosilleaux made a point of waving at him. Jonathon waited for the salute, and then, with a telescope, would study every inch of the roadstead and the land and the sea. He could never forget Cap Français, and he would never mistake the nationality of a French warship.

Away in the top from all but an occasional seaman, Jonathon's hurt festered. Late in July, a careless clerk in the *Intrepide,* seventy-four, accidentally set her afire. The flaming ship was run aground, but her loaded guns heated into explosion, and bombarded the town and roadstead. Aloft above the scene, Jonathon watched the spectacle, and felt little pity for those who did not escape the disaster or the random shot. When the *Intrepide* blew up, he did not grieve, merely remarking to himself that the accident would not have occurred had the French been about their business off New York.

His hostility should have centered in de Tasigny, since the Breton was the only one in the *Ixion* who actively insulted him, but to him, de Tasigny was only a spokesman for the rest, who preferred to give lip-service to courtesy. His suspicions of the French alliance, despite the interlude with the *Amitié,* had corroded into contempt.

And then, he lost touch with the last vestige of French respect, as de Grasse finally replied to Washington and Rochambeau.

A cable length or two away, his late home, the *Amitié,* manned her yards and shook out her sails. Jonathon could hear the chanty with which her seamen put their backs into the capstan bars, and could see the anchor line slowly straighten its bight. On the forecastle, de Rosilleaux gaily waved his hat. Guessing that the Frenchman was bidding him adieu, Jonathon half-heartedly waved back. He owed de Rosilleaux, if none other, the hospitality of Baltimore, and hoped someday to entertain him.

Cautiously, the *Amitié* filled topsails, came up to her iron, and backed canvas. With a burst of power, the men at the capstan broke out the heavy hook. Instantly, the *Amitié's* yards were braced to the wind, her other sail snapped down, and she smartly got underway, the anchor coming clear in an easy swing.

With great regret and senseless anger, Jonathon watched her follow the *Concorde* out the channel to the open sea. Within two weeks at most, the swift frigate would be at Newport with her duplicates of de Grasse's dispatches. Jonathon wished her Godspeed and a clear ocean. It wouldn't do for her to run into a British ship-of-the-line with a newly coppered bottom.

He watched the frigates round the hook of land surmounted by the fort. Then, snapping shut the telescope, entirely lonesome, he slowly climbed down to the deck and went to his quarters.

Sitting at his desk, he began a furious

letter to Colonel Warren, pointing out that de Grasse could manifestly do without him. Although his corrected charts had been left aboard the *Ville de Paris,* Jonathon was certain they would merely rot in a drawer until years later, when the magnificent three-decker was decommissioned, some scrubby quartermaster would rout them out, examine them with great merriment, and pack them with other rubbish to be burned.

He looked at the letter, sighed, and tore it up. A week later, he still had not stated his discontent or his intentions so that he was certain Warren would understand his resignation.

One afternoon, when de Tasigny came into the stateroom to prepare for supper, he said casually, "Tomorrow, Major, you'll have to be careful with that ink. We shall be at sea.'

In this manner, Jonathon learned that the fleet was going to quit Santo Domingo.

CHAPTER IV

FLEET MANEUVERS

AT THE end of the midwatch on August 6th, 1781, Admiral de Grasse flew the signal to loose sail. Posted by choice upon the *Ixion's* quarterdeck, Jonathon watched the two dozen sleeping giants bustle into life. The previous days, they had taken aboard three regiments and a detachment of cavalry to carry into the American campaign, and Jonathon was unable to repress a thrill of expectancy as the fleet prepared to move.

One by one, the ships-of-the-line threaded through the channel, accepted the salutes of the batteries and Fort Picolet, and entered the deeps of the open sea. By noon, they had sighted Tortuga, the island stronghold during the bloody centuries of piracy, and filed by, a force which in the days of Morgan would have made short work of the terrible buccaneers. Studying the mountainous slopes of the little island nestling against the rugged silhouette of Hispaniola, Jonathon was happy to be living in a civilized era.

He looked at the spectacle of the mighty fleet heeled to the prevailing westerlies. With frigates flung out in a scouting line, rolling beneath the bright blue of the sky, the French seemed invincible. The display of strength was greater than the wealth of the colonies could muster; even employed half-heartedly, the fleet could strike a gigantic blow for Washington. Jonathon prayed they would not sight Sandy Hook too late to be of service.

Crossing the Windward Passage and raising the wooded slopes of Cuba, the fleet was alerted by the sight of three sails, which proved to be another division under de Glandeves.

Desiring to screen his movements from British frigates, de Grasse boldly plunged his ships into the narrow Old Channel north of Cuba. Never before had such a fleet passed through those waters. For three anxious days, the ships struggled against contrary winds in the narrowest part of the pass. On either side, reefs and shallows lusted for their hulls, but on the 14th of August, a strong wind sprang up, and they escaped into the relative security of Nicholas Channel, south of Salt Key Bank.

The frigate *Aigrette* coursed ahead to pick up money from the Spanish in Havana, and returned with the gold to Matanzas, where she rendezvoused with the fleet. De Grasse then turned north to pass through the straits of Florida. Thus far, he was certain that the British in the West Indies were uncertain of his movements, for he had hugged friendly shores. Now he began a race for another rendezvous known only to a handful of men, none of whom were British.

For more than a week, hustled along by the Gulf Stream, the ships-of-the-line plowed through the Bahama Channel. Jonathon found life underway little more pleasant, even though every hour that the fleet went north, he was brought nearer to repatriation. Physically, as the ships mounted in latitude, with fresh ocean breezes whipping down hatches, his situation improved, for he was enabled to remain in his stateroom, and de Tasigny was busy with duties about ship. Such times as de Tasigny was with him were unpleasant, for the Breton did not change, contriving to give the impression that Jonathon was shirking some duty by remaining below deck.

One afternoon, Jonathon at length tired of living perpetually by lanthorn light,

and made free to haul up the portlid of the eighteen-pounder which occupied much of the stateroom's space. Sitting in a chair, he had a magnificent view of the water, and the nearby ships. Cooled by the breeze, he was happily sketching a seventy-four under plain sail, when de Tasigny interrupted him.

"Must you have the port open, Major?"

Jonathon glanced up. De Tasigny was standing behind him, a superciliously courteous expression on his saturnine face. "It is comfortable," he replied.

"Doubtless," de Tasigny said, "but it is the only port open. If you don't mind, we will close it."

"One moment," Jonathon cried in sudden exasperation. "I do mind! Let it be, Monsieur."

De Tasigny paused in the act of reaching for the portlid line. "You do not understand, Major," he said politely. "The men will notice that my stateroom is ventilated. Their quarters are not. They will be discontented."

"I see," Jonathon said. "Your solicitude for the men is touching. Why don't you provide each with his own hammock, so a man doesn't have to sleep in another's perspiration?"

De Tasigny flushed. "Portlids are within my control, Major. I cannot change the customs of the service."

"Of course you can't," Jonathon agreed, putting down his pen. "Close the port."

Suppressing rage, de Tasigny let the heavy oak lid slam down over the cannon's chase. Deftly lashing it in place, the Breton ignored his guest, turning to his locker for a fresh shirt. Changing in silence, he tossed his rumpled shirt into the locker, banged the door shut, and stormed out into the passageway.

Jonathon felt a trifle guilty, being certain that within the next few minutes some unfortunate wretch would fall victim to de Tasigny's wrath. The crew had his complete sympathy. De Tasigny was far from being the solicitous officer that de Rosilleaux was, and not even after the long stay in the Indies had the *Ixion's* people shaken the curse of scurvy and pestilence. So long as de Tasigny persisted in refusing to ventilate the hold, illness would breed and spread. Nearly a third of the men were debilitated, some were dying in the orlop. Jonathon was aware of the dangers of opening the lower tier of ports in a two-decker. A sudden squall could send the seas pounding into the hull and sink the ship before the watch could even get below. However, he could see no reason to deliberately forego the comforts and boon to health to be derived from opening the upper tier of ports which were high enough from the water to be secure against all save a hurricaned sea.

THE English had long since discovered the anti-scorbutic qualities of citrus fruits, and many French captains followed the practice of purchasing oranges and limes for their men. Indeed, Jonathon knew that de Marchantel had personally paid for a boatload of such health-preserving products of Hispaniola. On the *Ixion,* however, the captain naively clung to the superstition of strong drink as a preventive, so that the crew, if nothing else, were able thrice a day to escape for a

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little time from the tortures of their life.

Drink was all that the *Ixion's* men had to expect from life. Their lot was even worse than that of their British counterparts, a quarter of whom deserted whenever afforded an opportunity. De Tasigny was a harsh executive, quick to enforce discipline, using the men under him to present the picture of a zealous, efficient officer who well merited the Cross of the Order of Saint-Louis, which carried a life pension wherewith a frugal gentleman could live out his days in dignity.

For himself, Jonathon needed no king's pension to be financially secure. Once out of the service, even if the war ended before he could profit by privateering, he could return to an excellent income as a merchant ship operator, unless, of course, King George won, and demanded the heads of all rebels. With the leisure necessarily at his disposal, Jonathon reinforced his decision to resign his commission in the Army, being reminded from time to time, as the fleet moved north, of the delights of privateering, as the scouting line of frigates snapped up all the British vessels along the way.

He learned from the steward who customarily brought him his meals that one of the captured ships had contained the notorious Lord Rawdon. Jonathon was pleased to think that the terror of the Southern colonies would be carried to New York instead of England, where his crimes against the American populace could be properly dealt with. De Grasse had taken a noteworthy prisoner.

Jonathon amused himself by sketching a chart of the coast and estimating the position of the fleet. He had them placed somewhere off the entrance to the Chesapeake, when, the evening of August 28th, he was startled by a summons to the navigator's cabin. Dressing hastily, he followed the messenger up the ladder to the chartroom, wondering what de Tasigny had contrived to plague him.

He was soon informed.

De Tasigny and the *Ixion's* captain were bent over a chart, and both looked up as he entered. The captain was an indolent noble of France, who went to sea because it was expected of him. "Monsieur," he said petulantly, "kindly identify this object."

Puzzled, Jonathon looked at the chart. It was one of Lynn Haven Bay, on the Virginia coast, apparently a duplicate of a chart he had corrected on the *Amitié*. There, in copperplate French script, were all the changes he had made, with a few additional items he did not recognize. Still amazed, he raised his eyes.

"Well?" snapped the captain, whose temper was sharpened by responsibility and a dislike for navigation.

"That is a house," Jonathon said, "a house with four chimneys."

The captain grunted in annoyance and painfully printed the information on the chart. "And this, Monsieur?"

Thus, for upwards of an hour, Jonathon described Lynn Haven Bay, entirely baffled by the interest shown in such an obscure anchorage, where he had often passed the night when inclement weather made it inadvisable for his ship to proceed up the Chesapeake to Baltimore. The captain and de Tasigny pounced upon each driblet of information, as Jonathon probed into memory. It was an unconscious effort, for Jonathon's head whirled with questions of his own.

Then a quartermaster put his head into the chartroom. "Signal from the flagship, Monsieur. We are to anchor."

The captain looked wearily at de Tasigny. "Attend to it," he ordered.

After de Tasigny had gone, and the ship had begun to complain with the curses of awakened men, Jonathon made bold to say to the captain, "Is the fleet putting in to Lynn Haven Bay?"

The captain nodded. "Yes, Monsieur. We are some four leagues from the coast. We enter on the morrow." His worried eyes were on the shallows about Cape Henry.

"Why, Monsieur?" Jonathon asked bluntly.

"The admiral has ordered it," replied the captain absently.

"It is distant from New York," Jonathon said anxiously. "Surely the ships have enough water and supplies to last until New York."

The captain glanced at him. "Obviously, Monsieur, we are not going to New York." He removed his spectacles. "If you will pardon me, I must see to this maneuver." He bowed slightly, and went out on deck, quitting a thoroughly disgruntled major of the Maryland Line.

Even though the *Ixion* swung to an anchor in the groundswell a few miles from Cape Henry, Jonathon had a poor night's sleep. His brain was afire with execrations of the French, as he saw, once again, a fleet wasted against a secondary object. Clinton was the main strength of the British Army, so naturally de Grasse chose to pursue Cornwallis. Apparently, King Louis was not yet ready to end a war from which he might recoup earlier disasters. Thinking of the joy with which Washington's staff had received the news that de Grasse was directed to second Rochambeau, Jonathon was not amused.

He was too far sunk in despondency to resent it when de Tasigny, at length coming to bed, thoughtlessly opened the lanthorn so that the stateroom was flooded with light. De Tasigny had become the least of Jonathon's irritations.

CHAPTER V

YANKEE PILOT

AT DAYBREAK, de Grasse brought his ships into the shallow indentation which formed the roadstead of Lynn Haven. Forming them in three defensive columns, he prepared to concert operations with the land forces, sending off a courier to announce his arrival to the expectant Franco-American Army, which was marching on the Chesapeake in obedience to his desires.

The morning exhausted Jonathon, for the *Ixion's* captain, confronted with obviously dangerous water, called upon him to pilot the ship to her station. De Tasigny fretted about entrusting such responsibility to an American, and with finger on chart, listening to the leadsmen crying out their soundings, constantly warned that Jonathon was carrying the ship to her death, and urged the captain to dismiss him to his quarters. This nettled Jonathon to the extent that he would gladly have rammed the *Ixion* down de Tasigny's throat, but realizing a definite need for his experience until the quartermasters at least were familiar with the roadstead, he resisted impulses to throttle the Breton, and carried on.

By the time the *Ixion* had slipped into position, doused sail and let go her bowers, Jonathon was ready for a week's sleep. Glaring angrily at de Tasigny, he pointed out the best landmarks for the quartermasters to keep their watch by, requested permission from the captain to go below, and glanced longingly at the friendly flats stretching from Cape Henry into the west. In a day or two, given a fair wind, he could reach home, and at last be in his own bed. The thought gave him cold comfort.

Feeling that he had at last earned the right to be in such distinguished company, he rejoined the society in the *carré des officiers*. Thanks to this rehabilitation, he was again in touch with the news of the world. Thus he learned that Cornwallis was indeed the objective of the combined operations. Washington's prize project, the attack on New York, had been tactfully abandoned in deference to de Grasse's choice.

Jonathon believed that the French had once again betrayed Washington, and was grimly sorry to hear that de Grasse had almost been compelled to fight an action or display his incompetency to the world. The British, possessing copper-bottomed ships, had outsailed de Grasse in pursuing him from the Indies. Putting into the Chesapeake, and not finding him there, they had gone posthaste off to New York, missing accurate intelligence of the French fleet by a matter of hours. Jonathon wished that the British had not been so precipitate, remaining in Lynn Haven Bay until de Grasse stumbled upon them, so that the analogy between d'Estaing and de Grasse could have been more closely drawn.

He did not for a moment believe that de Grasse would have attacked, but if the situation had arisen, he would have been given an unanswerable argument with which to silence Colonel Warren forever on the subject of the French Marine. As it was, he was left only with his uncharitable suspicions. These, however, sufficed together with his general disillusionment to persuade him to write a letter to Warren enclosing his resignation rom the Army effective upon completion of his present duty.

Having at last taken the step which separated him from tremulous dependency upon foreign assistance, he regained a measure of equanimity, thereby discover-

ing to his surprise that the *Ixion's* officers were indifferent rather than hostile. When he was able to smile at their comments about the savage life in America, he discovered that often as not they would smile back. They came from different worlds, and as he listened to their conversations, he sensed that all unknown to them, his world was superior. Each officer, from the captain down to the youngest *élève* was concerned only for his dignity and security, both of which flowed from the King. An American put his trust in his own hands.

Aside from speculations about the earliest opportunity to observe the virtues of American women, the main topic in the wardroom centered for a time upon the sad plight of some Tories, who, more eager than keensighted, had rowed out to one of the French ships in the roadstead to present gifts to the admiral, under the impression that they were dealing with the British. Their disillusionment made de Grasse's fleet chuckle with amusement, and this laughter was good for morale.

For himself, Jonathon stated an unflattering opinion that there would have been nothing to laugh about had the Tories actually boarded a British ship. His opinion was met by merriment, as the gentlemen of the *Ixion* chose to misunderstand the implications of his remark. If nothing else, they were contemptuously confident of their ability to beat a British fleet, especially after their season of sparing in the Indies.

AS THE state of affairs became clear to him, Jonathon did not envy Cornwallis. In the midst of a moderately successful campaign in Virginia, the British general was diverted from his own plans of pacification by orders to establish a Chesapeake base for the fleet. If the Royal Navy could control the Bay and its water, then Washington's communications with the South would be thrust back into the mountains and the war would be just that much more difficult for the rebels. It was a shrewd move designed to split the colonies so they could be subdued in detail. In England, the Whig opponents of King George's ambitions to be king in fact as well as name, grimly set back and awaited the outcome. The first combination had failed with the defeat of St. Leger and the capture of Burgoyne. If the second failed, the Tories would be discredited.

All this, Cornwallis realized. Even so, he was loath to quit his own scheme, although as a good soldier, he selected Yorktown, where a few vessels of d'Estaing's fleet had wintered after being damaged in the unsuccessful operations against Savannah. The York peninsula was the best station according to his surveys, and reluctantly evacuating Portsmouth he landed his troops at the future naval base. He was busily cursing Clinton and King George and Germaine and throwing up fortifications, when he suddenly became aware that he was the object of French and American intentions.

Having little more than five thousand men, scarcely a third of Clinton's force, Cornwallis discovered that the puny companies of Lafayette were actually containing him, to block escape to the British stronghold at Charlestown. Accustomed after many years to cooperation with the Royal Navy, Cornwallis made no attempt to escape to the South, even after being reliably reassured that Washington and Rochambeau had slipped past New York to come after him. Indeed, he did not worry about being isolated on a peninsula, for he expected ultimate relief by Admiral Graves. The Royal Navy had always come in the past, and he saw no reason to expect that the present would be any different.

And then de Grasse anchored in Lynn Haven Roads off the Bay. Cornwallis's first view of warships was one of quiet satisfaction, as he faced the laborious duty of writing his orders to embark his troops. His second view espied the lilies of France fluttering over the rails of the lofty ships-of-the-line, and he realized with a jolt that enemy vessels were actually blockading him. Having at hand a promise from Admiral Graves to come and get him, Cornwallis humorlessly hurried his men into completing preparations for a siege. He was trapped, and could be freed only if Graves wrested control of the Chesapeake entrance away from de Grasse.

Of this, of course, Cornwallis had little real doubt. Still, the presence of the French fleet circumscribed his movements, and he did not care to have the captains of the few British frigates, sloops and transports with him burn their vessels.

There was something ominous in the willful destruction of those symbols of Britain's power, even though their guns and crews stiffened the shore batteries.

Cornwallis was made still more uneasy when some fifteen hundred officers and men of the fleet manned their boats to land three full regiments of seasoned French troops to his south on the shore of the James River. With Lafayette to the north, Cornwallis could only plunge westward into a hostile country should the Royal Navy fail him.

Grimly, then, Cornwallis waited for succor.

Jonathon cynically did not believe that Cornwallis had much to worry about, nor, if Cornwallis was by a miracle obliged to surrender, did Jonathon see how the course of the war would thereby be affected. The seat of British power was still New York, and de Grasse no more than d'Estaing appeared willing to root Clinton out of his formidable fortifications. Indeed, Jonathon's principal worry was personal; he feared that the arrival of the British would send de Grasse scurrying back to France, and thus keep him longer from his wife.

Being on the American coast did at least make him important to the *Ixion*. Her captain nervously requested him to instruct the quarterdeck gang in the piloting features of Chesapeake Bay. Thus, on September 4th, when a frigate sailed into the roadstead and headed for the flagship, Jonathon was on deck initiating the quartermasters in the peculiarities of the Middle Ground. He paused irritably while the man on watch anxiously surveyed the newcomer through a glass in order to identify her for the log.

"The *Amitié,* Monsieur!" he shouted to the officer of the day, who had sleepily come scuttling up from the wardroom.

JONATHON had deemed himself beyond elation over news of anything French, but mention of the *Amitié* stirred him. Perhaps the contrast between his treatment aboard the different ships persuaded him that afternoon to approach de Tasigny for permission to use a ship's boat at the conclusion of the working day.

Fully aware of the reasons prompting the request, de Tasigny said flatly, "No, Major." He leaned back in his chair, a contrast to the luxurious furnishings of the *Seconde's* office, and awaited an appeal from the decision.

Jonathon scornfully looked at the Breton, and curbed his resentment, refusing either to explain or plead. After a long moment, during which his opinion was clearly received without being spoken, he turned on his heel and went back on deck, to lose his anger in the therapy of work. It was a small thing for de Tasigny to deny him. Jonathon could have carried the matter to the captain, and possibly had his boat after all, but he did not feel like requesting further favors, preferring to file the refusal in his memory as another score against de Tasigny.

His day's assignment done, he went quietly to his stateroom, stretched out in his hammock, and mused unhappily about his nearby yet distant wife. By closing his eyes, he had almost succeeded in visualizing her dark, serene features, when a rap at the doorframe caused him to swing down to the deck.

"Yes?" he growled, loath to part with Deborah.

"Tiens!" cried a well-known voice. "You have become a Gascon!"

Jonathon's eyes widened in increasing joy as his friend de Rosilleaux debonairly whisked the portiere aside, and stepped smilingly into the stateroom. He saw nothing strange in the comradely way in which de Rossileaux deftly kissed him on both cheeks before settling into a chair. Indeed, he was pleased by the salute.

"So you now snarl like a wolf," de Rosilleaux chided. "Come, it is really I. Sit. I have something for you." He laid a haversack on a table beside him and produced a bottle of Bordeaux.

"I am glad to see you," Jonathon said simply.

De Rosilleaux's eyes were busily searching for drinking glasses. "Where the devil do you keep them?" he demanded petulantly. "What kind of a French ship is this?"

"Here one does not drink," Jonathon explained somberly.

De Rosilleaux's brow puckered for a moment. "No matter," he then said, laughingly popping the cork. "I trust you to leave half."

With the warmth of Bordeaux cascad-

ing into his vitals, and a good friend before him, Jonathon felt almost happy. "I am glad to see you," he said again.

"You should be!" de Rosilleaux exclaimed, snapping his fingers. "See what I have brought you." He reached into the haversack and pulled out a packet, which he offered to Jonathon. "These awaited you at Newport. We brought them down with us, knowing you would have them the sooner."

Instantly recognizing Deborah's hand, Jonathon snatched avidly at the packet. It was his first news from her since June. He ripped at the cord binding the letters together.

Tactfully, de Rosilleaux stood up. "If you will excuse me," he said, "I will return within the hour."

Devouring each page indited by Deborah's strong, nimble fingers, Jonathon was scarcely aware that his friend had left. All was well in Baltimore, she missed him, she hoped the war would end before their youth was sped. He read the letters again, slowly, and let her possess him.

When de Rosilleaux discreetly rapped at the door to announce his return, Jonathan was ready to talk. The haversack produced an endless series of bottles, and by suppertime, Jonathon was able to take de Rosilleaux to the *carré des officiers* as though the ship were his. Fortunately, he did not have to make many introductions, for de Rosilleaux appeared to be acquainted with most of the officers, save for a few of the more junior.

THE evening passed too quickly, and Jonathon was startled when a messenger informed de Rosilleaux that it was midnight, and the *Amitié's* boat was alongside. Jonathon accompanied his guest and friend up the ladder forward of the wardroom, and walked with him to the entryway. Before setting foot on the gangway, having discharged his courtesies to the officer of the day, de Rosilleaux turned to Jonathon, and shook his hand in English fashion.

"It has been a pleasure, *mon ami.*"

Jonathon patted de Rosilleaux fondly on the shoulder. "Send your boat for me tomorrow like a good fellow," he begged.

"I cannot," de Rosilleaux said sadly. "We go up the York River to blockade."

"Let me go with you," Jonathon suggested, moving into the entryport.

De Rosilleaux stopped him with a gentle hand. "They need you here," he said quietly, "much though we want you."

"Let me go with you."

"Jonnie," de Rosilleaux said, "it is impossible. But listen to me. Beware of de Tasigny. I have learned he means you harm."

Jonathon waved a dismissing hand. "I'm coming with you," he said.

"Beware of that man," de Rosilleaux warned, and hurried down the gangway before Jonathon could clumsily follow.

His head battered by prime Bordeaux, Jonathon amiably let de Rosilleaux go, waving him out of sight. Then, scorning the hands of his newly-won friends, the quartermasters, he staggered over to a hatch, and lurched below to his hammock. De Tasigny did not stir, even when Jonathon missed his grip and crashed to the deck.

The following morning, Jonathon did not rise for breakfast, and indeed, would not have risen at all had his head not been racked by an intolerable pounding. He opened his eyes to a bright world. The pounding did not cease. He remained quiet in the hammock, cursing the hidden power of delicate Bordeaux until he became abruptly aware that he was not alone in the stateroom.

A powerful hand respectfully but urgently touched his leg. "Pardon, Monsieur," an unfamiliar voice said, "you had better rise."

Jonathon lifted his head and stared at a bare-chested gunner who was standing alongside the hammock. Men were busily unrigging the stateroom partitions, and at any moment would remove one of the hammock hooks holding Jonathon comfortably aloft. Other men were fumbling at the lashings of the eighteen-pounder, having raised the portlids to let in the blinding sun.

"What's happened?" Jonathon demanded, supplely slipping down to the deck, manfully suppressing the outraged shrieks from within his brain. The ship was obviously underway, as a sudden lift of the keel almost flung him sprawling.

"We're going after the British, Monsieur," the gunner said, already having the hammock unslung.

"The British?" Jonathon mumbled, and managed to hop aside just as the carpenters brought down the passageway partition. He stumbled away from the gun, which was finally unlashed and eased into its tackle. He looked forward along the centerline; once a bulkhead had barred his view, but now he could see the frames marching into the stem, with knots of gunners wrestling with their weapons. Save for a few partitions still in place, the *Ixion's* upper deck had been cleared into one great battery.

His head forgotten, Jonathon leaped for the ladder.

Topside, under the sun, seamen hastily struggled to rig *sauve-têtes* to keep debris blown from the spars and masts from crushing the guncrews and officers on the spardeck. Jonathon looked out to sea.

In the northeast, nineteen ships under foresails and topgallants were headed for Lynn Haven Bay. De Grasse was caught with his fleet half underway, half shaking out sail, all furiously rushing to form a line of battle in the order of speed. The *Ixion* had been preceded by some dozen vessels, all fighting against an almost northerly wind which was carrying them down on the shallows of Cape Henry. In great disorder, each ship tacked at will to claw away from the land, and gain the sea.

Jonathon did not pause to criticize the display.

"Captain!" he cried, dashing to the helm. "Steady on due east!"

The *Ixion's* master, intent on the nearby shore, whirled to face the author of such a mad suggestion. Seeing Jonathon, his expression changed from one of impatient fury to quick intelligence. In the strain of an emergency, he sloughed off his incapacity and became at last a knight eager to break a lance with the enemy.

"We will strike a strong current," Jonathon explained breathlessly, bending over the compass ring to take a few bearings, while the *Ixion* came to her new course. "It will carry us down on shore, but also out to sea. Closehaul when I pass the word."

The *Ixion's* captain nodded assent. He was willing to risk going aground if a current would relieve him of time-consuming beating to windward. It was worth more to him to win searoom than to preserve his dignity as undisputed leader of his men. Nobly, he yielded to Jonathon's superior knowledge, although the decision caused him pangs of anxiety.

Fearful that the British would fall upon the unformed van and annihilate those unlucky ships before the French center and rear could move up in support, Jonathon made his contribution to the battle by endeavoring to bring the *Ixion* up to the scene of inevitable action. With every man intent upon preparing for the engagement, few observed that the *Ixion* was following a lonely course. Only the navigating crew on the quarterdeck seemed aware of the dangers ahead of the *Ixion* as the lowlands of Cape Henry steadily slid to port across her bows.

HUNCHED over the compass ring, Jonathon unknowingly presented a picture of the American sailor at his best. Cool, certain of his decision, confident in his knowledge, he waited for the closing of

Edward Mann*

has switched to Calvert because Calvert makes a lighter highball

*of 1522 Kelton Ave., W. Los Angeles, Calif.

CALVERT RESERVE Blended Whiskey—86.8 Proof—65% Grain Neutral Spirits. Calvert Distillers Corp., New York City

a range between two houses. When they were in line, the *Ixion* had to turn and claw into the wind, for the water shoaled rapidly up into the channel cut by the current. Imperturbably, he waited for the range.

The tension on the quarterdeck was abruptly shattered. De Tasigny burst through a hatch and excitedly ran to the captain's side. *"Monsieur le Capitaine,"* he cried in astonishment. "Do you mean to wreck us?"

Despite the boldness of the question, the *Ixion's* master replied calmly, "Not at all, Monsieur. Is the ship ready for action?"

De Tasigny ignored the tactful question whose answer would have spared him the knowing glances exchanged by the men on the quarterdeck. "As *Seconde,* Monsieur," he rasped, "I demand to know why you are placing the ship in jeopardy!"

The captain frowned at the insubordinate impertinence. "I trust that our pilot will enable us to enter the action," he replied sarcastically.

"And I do not trust an American!" de Tasigny cried. Lithely, he leaped at the wheel. His enraged hands flung the quartermasters aside. He bawled orders for the topmen to trim sails closehauled to the wind. Trained to his voice, the men obeyed.

The *Ixion's* captain hotly drew his sword and stepped towards the helm. Boiling inwardly at the public discrediting of his ability, Jonathon straightened up from the compass ring, and managed to say calmly, "No matter, Captain. We would have had to turn in another minute anyway."

The captain glanced at Jonathon. To him, the maneuvering of his ship without his express command was of more importance than coming to grips with the English. As a gentleman, he detested embarrassing scenes, but as a commanding officer he could not afford to brook insubordination. If anything, Jonathon was more angry, for his entire loyalty as well as his skill had been violently sullied, yet Jonathon was able to offer the captain an example of self-control.

"Thank you, Monsieur," the captain said, and stepped to de Tasigny's side.

The Breton, intent upon saving the ship despite what he considered her master's stupid faith in deceitful Yankees, paid little attention to the captain, who said, "That will do. Return to your station."

De Tasigny did not obey, as slowly, the *Ixion* swung in a gentle arc, Cape Henry retreating on her starboard hand, and her bows pointing towards the second ship in the van.

"Return to your station, Monsieur," the captain repeated in a tone which bore the heavy stamp of his authority.

Still de Tasigny did not move.

With his own hands, the captain plucked de Tasigny's fingers from the helm, and the quartermasters caught the wheel. "Go below," he said quietly.

"The American will not destroy the ship!" de Tasigny raged.

"Go below," the captain said wearily.

De Tasigny glared at Jonathon, wordlessly spun on his heel, and haughtily vanished down the quarterdeck hatch.

"You've water enough to hold this course, Monsieur," Jonathon said.

The captain nodded gratefully. Thanks to the maneuver the *Ixion* would move into the van in fifth or sixth place, and the van was certain to be the place of honor. "We are in your debt, Monsieur," he said graciously.

"Merci," Jonathon murmured, and did not remark that he intended to have a brief conversation with de Tasigny in the privacy of their stateroom. Jonathon attempted to grasp the swiftly changing tactical situation. He was amused to note that other vessels were making the same venture on which he had gambled the *Ixion,* and wished their pilots success. The French were still in woeful disorder, at the complete mercy of a determined adversary, and Jonathon was stunned to discover that the British were still carrying short sail, wasting time dressing their line rather than fall like a thunderbolt upon the hapless de Grasse. The French rear was being permitted to form south of the Middle Ground, thus to sail in line of battle out into the open sea.

Glancing at the sun, Jonathon judged that it was one o'clock, and, since the *Ixion* was comfortably gaining on the beam of the eastward-bound van, he begged the captain to be excused, and went below in search of breakfast. Although the ship's fires had long since been put out, he suspected that he could find

"Return to your station, Monsieur," the captain repeated.

relief for his hunger within the surgeon's purlieus, and so walked down to the orlop.

On the gundeck, looking for the orlop hatch, he was halted by a shout from de Tasigny. Suddenly, unaccountably, he tensed. He was not prepared to have it out with the Breton in public; his settlement would occur in private.

In the murky light of the *Ixion's* main strength as a battleship, de Tasigny's saturnine face was livid. "American dog!" he spat at Jonathon. "You did not quite succeed!" He shook his hanger. "You will answer to me when this day is done!"

"And you to me," Jonathon replied testily.

De Tasigny spat an epithet, and rushed about his business.

Undisturbed by the passionate outburst, Jonathon continued on his way to the surgeon, where, snug below the waterline, as he had expected, he found food and drink. Surgeons were notoriously careful of their stomachs, especially during the boring hours of sparring before battle.

CHAPTER VI

THE ODOR OF GLORY

HALF an hour later, comforted physically, Jonathon climbed back up to the spardeck. The *Ixion* had proudly pushed her way into the fifth place in the van, and her captain greeted Jonathon as though they were brothers, waving gaily back at the fleet which followed. "They will be too late!" he gloated.

Jonathon saw why.

In the time he had been below on practical affairs, the British had astoundingly put about to parallel the disorderly French line. Thus their commander had committed two unforgivable blunders. First, the British had been offered an opportunity to smash de Grasse before he could shove more than his van into action. Had the van been shattered, the center and rear, pinned against Cape Henry, would have been sunk or driven aground, and the twenty-four ships of de Grasse would by sunset have become so much useless metal and wood. Second, having left the van alone, the British could have beaten their way through the straggling rear and seized the anchorage at Lynn Haven Bay. Either of these measures would have given control of the Chesapeake to Admiral Graves, and upon that control the very existence of Cornwallis depended.

But Graves discarded his opportunities, and was given no more.

Hampered by the wind, the French van valiantly clutched at the enemy, and, having won the sea before the center, stood well to windward of immediate support from de Grasse. Against an able commander, the venturesome French would have perished. However, Graves, bound by cumbrous signals, tradition and Fighting Instructions, endeavored to set up a

formal battle in which ship could fight ship, rather than concentrate overwhelming force against inferior numbers. Having the weather, Graves could open the action at will; he chose to do so about four o'clock.

The British fell away from the wind and bore down in column upon the French, thus coming into action one by one, rather than simultaneously. Fascinated by the almost unbelievable series of blunders, Jonathon saw the engagement commence with a flash of smoke from the sides of His Majesty's seventy-four gun ship *Alfred* and His Most Christian Majesty's seventy-four gun ship *Pluton*. Then the *Belliquex*, sixty-four, doughtily let go a broadside at the *Marseillais*, seventy-four. The barking guns rumbled echoes across the waves.

Having marked his antagonist, the seventy-four gun *King William*, the captain of the *Ixion* sniffed the air. "The odor of glory, Monsieur," he said quietly.

Jonathon's nose was less sensitive. He could not smell the tang of gunsmoke swirled towards them by the wind.

"Never fear," the captain smiled, nodding towards the *King William*, "you soon will smell it keenly."

The *Ixion* was silently tensed for action, all guns trained on their target. On the quarterdeck, here and there a gun-captain fussed with quoins to bring his light weapon to maximum elevation, for the first exchange of broadsides would be better suited to thirty-two pounders than long nines. Slowmatches spluttered, with powdermonkeys keeping anxious watch lest a spark fall on a flannel cartridge and

The engagement commenced with a flash of smoke from the sides of His Majesty's seventy-four gun ship **Alfred.**

end the *Ixion's* career by disaster. The captain's *élève* stood by with quill and ink, incongruously concerned with writing down the events of the battle as they occurred, so that the *Ixion's* role would be properly reported to the King.

Aloft, the picked topmen leaned against spars to reduce the exposure of their bodies, and Marine officers prayed that they might have an opportunity to lead their men down onto the decks of an enemy so that they might blood their swords. Their men prayed for precisely the opposite boon, considering their exposed job dangerous enough without the added risks of boarding.

Below, on the two battery decks, officers stalked along the rows of guns, encouraging flagging spirits as the *King William* loomed larger in the ports, and the fourth pair of ships went into action. French guns, class for class, were heavier and longer than their English cousins, and due to this could only be discharged three times to a Briton's four. Thus, French gunners could not afford to be slipshod.

The *King William* abruptly hid behind a cloud of smoke.

"Open your mouth," the captain advised Jonathon kindly, and lifted his trumpet to shout, "FIRE!"

Almost instantly, the *Ixion* seemed to explode. Jaws agape, Jonathon felt a sharp stab at his ears, and his vision reddened. The *Ixion* rolled two strakes away from the recoil of her broadside, guns rocketing violently back into tackle, there to be checked and held whilst gun crews sprang to reload. The *Ixion* rolled back towards the *King William,* and thus received her first wounds as the British salvo landed.

Jonathon felt the *Ixion* cringe from the stab of iron into her hull. Somewhere below, men screamed. His eyes and nose stung by the bite of burnt powdersmoke lashed by the wind across the deck, he had difficulty seeing the *King William.* Dazed by the shock of his first broadside, he saw the captain turn and speak to him, but the words did not penetrate his consciousness.

Helplessly, he shook his head and pointed to his ears. The captain smiled, and returned to the business of fighting his ship. Jonathon had stood in the line when his regiment discharged volleys of musketry, but was certain all of the small arms in the world could not equal the noise of a single broadside.

BEFORE he regained his hearing, the *Ixion* fired again. Jarred by concussion, he did not observe whether the shot struck home or fell short. For him, the *Ixion's* action with the *King William* became a bedlam of senseless confusion. Positive that the mighty ships could not long sustain such fire, he looked aft and discovered that the two-decker astern had not yet engaged, while the opposing centers were nearly an hour distant from each other. His imagination refused to visualize the prolongation of such titanic battering, even as the *Ixion* heeled away from another broadside. He did not understand how the French van could possibly remain afloat long enough for the ships off their starboard quarter to beat into the wind to their support. The British were able to be reinforced at any instant by their comrades, who, with the weather gauge, could sail free and pounce upon de Grasse at any point they chose.

A huge splinter ripped from a spar slashed through the ropes of the *sauve-tête* and crashed onto the deck near Jonathon. He leaped wildly, too late to have escaped had it been fated to strike him. Feeling foolish, he glanced around. No one on the quarterdeck was grinning; every man was fully occupied by his own task.

The ship astern entered the battle, and, although she was within a cable's length, Jonathon could not hear her guns, aware that she was engaged when her side lashed out with flame and smoke, which was seized by the wind and rushed through her upper works.

The battle was too unreal for him to be afraid. Guns seemed to go off by themselves, and shot struck aimlessly. From time to time sprays of splinters filtered down through the *sauve-tête,* and, looking aloft, he saw many holes in the *Ixion's* canvas. A pair of Marines, struck by a shot, were whisked soddenly off the mizzen top, and splashed lifelessly into the sea, with no one save Jonathon apparently aware of their passing. Near the centerline of the quarterdeck, a few inert seamen had been dragged by their comrades away

from the guns. The port bulwark had been shattered in several places, but all of the guns were still manned. Jonathon did not think that he would be struck down, because God knew he was merely a passenger.

Surveying the ships immediately astern, he noted that the vans had come to grips all the way back to the eighth pair. Looking forward, through the tangle of boarding nets, he was surprised that the leading British vessels had shifted their line of attack to parallel the French. He could not blame them for holding back, particularly after their commanding admiral's earlier blunders, but he was thankful that their captains did not know that each French ship was undermanned because of boatcrews and officers absent on the mission of bringing Washington and Rochambeau down to Yorktown. A hundred men in a boarding affray could easily mean the difference between defeat and victory.

His astonishment at the British failure to crush the forward ships of de Grasse's surprised fleet was matched by the captain's anxiety for the center to come up to the van's line of battle. Whatever the virtues or failing's of de Grasse's decision to move out of Lynn Haven roads, his commanders ably made the best of an awkward situation. Those engaged attempted to close with their enemies, while those not yet under fire strove to gain to windward, although this was decidedly difficult when simultaneously compelled to keep station on the *Ville de Paris*.

As sunset approached, barely a dozen of the leading ships on each side had managed to empty their batteries. Since darkness would take the van away from his control, de Grasse at length signaled for his exposed heroes to bear away from the wind. Thus, with the remainder of the fleet continuing to bear up, the French for the first time during the battle moved towards a definite line. Completely confused by the signals from Admiral Graves, as British naval historians were later to explain, the English permitted the range to open.

And so, shortly after sunset, fire slackened and finally died. The Battle of the Virginia Capes was over, and neither side had won.

The *Ixion* remained cleared for action, although messcooks lit the gallery fires and

A pair of Marines were whisked off the mizzen top and splashed into the sea.

prepared a hot supper for their exhausted comrades, who lolled by their guns to discuss their respective performances during the fight. Below, the carpenter and his crew set about plugging holes and shoring weakened frames or beams, while aloft, de Tasigny and a group of chosen seamen began to repair the ravages to sticks and rigging. The captain remained on the quarterdeck, receiving the discreet congratulations of his officers, each of whom hoped he would be praised by his superior for outstanding valor.

A steward came up out of the hold with a basket of brandy for the captain, carrying the treasure past the greedy hands of would-be drunkards. Placing two glasses on the binnacle, the captain opened a bottle. "Monsieur," he said, holding out a glass to the startled Jonathon, "please drink with me."

Hardly having recovered his senses, Jonathon numbly accepted the glass.

Politely, the captain bowed his head. "Had we been in our normal order in the line, we would not have engaged. To you, Monsieur, we owe the honor of being fifth in the van. I drink your health, Monsieur, and thank you—for France." He swallowed the brandy and smiled at Jonathon, who was the sudden cynosure of hate-filled eyes.

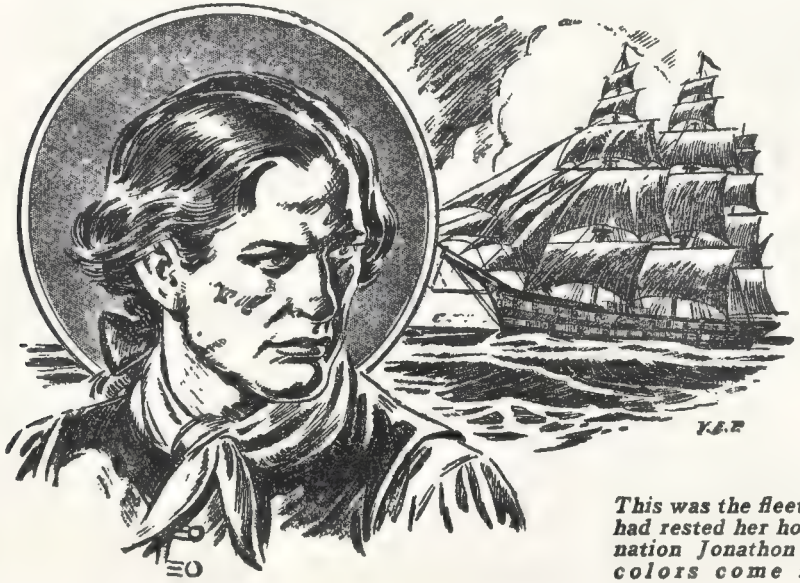
Jonathon realized that he was expected to reciprocate the courtesy, but could think of nothing graceful to say, being disconcerted by the unexpected gesture. "Your king, Monsieur," he mumbled at last, and drained his glass.

Embracing him for a moment, the captain of the *Ixion* then promptly forgot about him, as he distributed the remainder of the liquor to his officers, and ordered a triple tot of spirits for all hands.

That night, while de Tasigny fumed in the rigging, Jonathon slept soundly on the quarterdeck.

THE wind was light the following day, and the fleets drifted in plain view of each other some three miles apart, feverishly repairing damages. As the calm weather precluded maneuvering for battle, the *Ixion's* officers studied the British through their glasses, and jubilantly observed that some ships had been seriously hurt, while the French were relatively unharmed. Two British frigates slipped away to the Chesapeake to cut the buoy ropes in Lynn Haven Bay and to deliver Clinton's letters to Cornwallis, who, hearing the distant murmur of gunfire, was deliriously grateful that his relief had arrived.

Morning disclosed the British standing to the northward. De Grasse spent the day skillfully sparring for the all-important weather gauge, winning it late in the



This was the fleet on which France had rested her hopes; in his imagination Jonathon saw the British colors come floating down.

afternoon. A thrill of expectancy coursed through his fleet, but de Grasse did not order them to close. The lines were formed, there was sufficient daytime left, Graves was a bumbling incompetent, and the French had superior numbers and superior ships. Jonathon was disappointed. Granting that de Grasse had with luck retrieved an ugly situation, Jonathon thirsted for British blood. In the powerful ships enticed to leeward he saw the solitary obstacle to the recapture of New York, and thus the end of the war. With Graves wiped out or dispersed, the British could not place another force on the North American coast in time to prevent the obliteration of Cornwallis and the reployment of the Franco-American Army against Clinton. The war could have been ended by a sharp afternoon's work.

But night dropped down, and the decisive battle was unfought.

The *Ixion's* captain felt constrained to offer an explanation to his chagrined officers gathering on the quarterdeck for supper. "We do not want a single one to escape into the night, Messieurs," he said, and his explanation was applauded even by Jonathon.

When darkness passed, de Grasse promptly marked his foe and tacked to engage, but Graves gave way and would not fight, although he was extended in line of battle. Elated by de Grasse's evident determination, Jonathon roundly cursed the British, whose sterns were suddenly hidden by a series of rain squalls which made combat impossible. Contact was doggedly maintained throughout the night, and few men save de Grasse slept in the French fleet.

Early the next morning, as though to redeem his tainted honor, Graves capitalized upon a shift in the wind to snatch the weather from de Grasse. Wishing nothing better than a Briton resolved to give battle, Jonathon scarcely controlled his delight. De Grasse was no less pleased, particularly after his captains showed their mettle by adroitly tacking into a well-ordered line, ready and anxious to receive Graves. This was the fleet upon which France had rested her hopes for success, and it was worth all the sacrifice which had placed it on the seas. In his imagination, Jonathon saw the British colors come floating down.

Possibly seeing the same vision, Graves abruptly abandoned the attack, and signified he had had his fill of Frenchmen who knew how to handle ships. Setting all sail, he ran away, forsaking even the dignity of preserving division formations.

Nearly frantic with joy, Jonathon looked to the *Ville de Paris* for the signal which would set the confident, well-coordinated team of French ships-of-the-line loose upon the enemy.

The *Ville de Paris* made a signal.

Frowning, the signal lieutenant of the *Ixion* nervously fumbled through his book. The ship was galvanized with hope, but the excitement died stillborn when the signal lieutenant reported hesitantly that the admiral desired the fleet to return to its anchorage. The news surreptitiously spread through the crew by grapevine, and they sadly surrendered their dreams of joining France's immortals.

By the helm, the captain asked to be shown the signal in the book. As a lieutenant he had been present at Quebec when France lost her empire, and he did not easily relinquish the chance to avenge the flag. Satisfying himself with his own telescope that his subordinate had correctly read the signal, the captain slowly closed his glass. He glanced at Jonathon, who was frozen in silence. "Another time, perhaps, Monsieur," he said softly, then turned to a messenger. "My compliments to Monsieur de Tasigny. Tell him to secure the guns and set the watch."

CHAPTER VII

YORKTOWN

JONATHON stayed on deck, watching Graves disappear. Once again, as the *Ixion* headed north, his bitterness against the French flooded back into his soul. The palm had been within easy grasp, but like d'Estaing, after feinting, de Grasse obviously had reasons of his own for declining a victor's crown. Oblivious to the chattering of the watch, Jonathon plunged into a chasm of despair.

When someone told him that de Tasigny wished to see him in their quarters, he welcomed the invitation. Fists doubling and undoubling, he stormed into the stateroom.

"Pig!" de Tasigny snarled at him the instant he entered.

Jonathon's left hand clutched de Tasigny's shirt and his right almost ripped the Breton's jaw loose. He let go of the shirt, and de Tasigny reeled back against the eighteen-pounder. With magnificent will, de Tasigny fought back a sweeping tide of oblivion, gasping in pain for the power to speak.

Jonathon waited. There was no pleasure in pounding an insensible enemy. He wanted de Tasigny to be fully conscious as long as possible, for de Tasigny had suddenly become all that Jonathon hated in the French. He would dismember the Breton limb by limb. "After this," he said, "you may be more polite."

"Savage!" de Tasigny gasped, his eyes unafraid of Jonathon's tall, powerful body. "Do you know anything of gentlemanly customs?"

"You have more to say," Jonathon replied calmly. "Say it while you can."

De Tasigny limply pointed to the escritoire. "I challenge you to be a gentleman," he said, the words an effort.

Looking at a pair of pistols resting upon the exquisitely carved desk near him, Jonathon laughed. "Why should I?" he asked, raising a fist.

"You tried to run us aground!" de Tasigny croaked. "I challenge you in the name of France."

"You lie," Jonathon said evenly. The cold charm of the pistols worked upon his temper, and slowly substituted for his determination to use his hands. "You have hated Americans since one bankrupted your father."

De Tasigny flushed. Apparently he had not known his personal affairs were public property.

Jonathon smiled grimly, and continued. "Now you hate me to the point of death because you made an ass out of yourself before the battle. You are finished on this ship. Maybe you'll be finished in the Marine if the captain desires to break you. Isn't that right?"

De Tasigny stared silently.

"You want to kill me because you think it'll give you some peace of mind. Right?"

Mute, de Tasigny glanced longingly at the pistols. Jonathon could reach them before him, so he did not move.

Jonathon's resolution dissolved. He had endured too much to let even a desirable but distant wife influence him. "You simply want my blood. That's what you're after, isn't it?"

"Yes," de Tasigny said simply.

Jonathon scooped up a pistol. "Damme if I don't want yours!" he blurted. "State your conditions!"

De Tasigny straightened up. "Backs to the bulkheads and a count of three," he said briskly.

"Pick up your weapon," Jonathon replied curtly, and backed away.

Almost as though he had never been struck, de Tasigny got his pistol and lightly backed towards the opposite bulkhead. Scarcely seven paces would separate them. Jonathon was no longer thinking. He trusted his markmanship, but in his passion did not consider that de Tasigny was unmistakably an experienced duelist. He simply wished to erase forever the haughty sneer from the Breton's face, nothing more and nothing less.

Wedged between two lockers, de Tasigny seemed to be in full possession of his faculties. This was a business he well understood. Indeed, he even had his explanation of the bizarre duel ready for the captain. There would be some scandal and some necessary punishment, but it would leave less permanent stain on his career than the insubordination would. He expected at best in any case to be sent in penance to the East Indies, where he could broil for several years and serve the King as well. He expected at worst to be cashiered. In either event, he would have partially evened the score for his father and himself.

"Count, Monsieur," de Tasigny said courteously.

Jonathon was ironically amused. For the first time in their enforced association de Tasigny had addressed him without using his title of major. "One," he said grimly, the butt of the pistol clenched hard in his sweating hand. "Two." He resisted an urge to raise the weapon. "Three!" His eager hand flashed up.

Before he could even line up the sights, he was jolted back against the bulkhead by a spearing stab in his side. Incredulous, he stared across the stateroom. De Tasigny had fired from the hip, using the locker to aim true to the mark. Jonathon had been wounded before, but never so

De Tasigny reeled back against the eighteen-pounder.

ignominiously. A few inches more to the right and the ball would have pierced the great artery below his heart. Pain outraged his nerves, and his hand trembled.

"You filthy swine!" he croaked. "You filthy swine!"

Motionless against the bulkhead, de Tasigny paled as the American refused to drop to the deck. With the side of the locker to guide him, he had been certain that his shot would strike the aorta and send Jonathon sprawling to kick out his life in hemorrhage. But he had missed his aim. A small red splotch began to spread through the linen of Jonathon's shirt a little to the right of sure death. Fear blazed starkly in the Breton's eyes, and he unconsciously raised his hands to shield his own stomach.

Jonathon could not steady his fingers as he brought up the pistol. The barrel wobbled as he held the gun at arm's length. "This, Monsieur," he rasped, "this is the way in which a pistol is to be fired by gentlemen."

De Tasigny shrank from the wavering muzzle. Seven paces suddenly seemed a very short distance. He did not plead for his life, but he was evidently loath to lose it.

For a long minute, with de Tasigny cringing away from him, Jonathon struggled with the pistol. His will was not in the struggle. He lowered the barrel. Despite provocation, he could not shoot the Breton. "Here," he said, flinging his loaded gun onto the bed, "remember that you live only by my mercy."

Before de Tasigny could realize that this condescension was more humiliating than death, Jonathon staggered proudly out of the stateroom, and, disdaining aid, made his way alone to the surgeon.

HIS own bed was a kingdom, and Jonathon never wished to leave it. From the bedroom window he could see the golden, late afternoon sun make the buildings across the street as beautiful as their doorstoops. By getting into a chair, he could look out into the street and return the salutes of men and women he had grown up with. Each noise had a meaning for him, and he loved them all. The best was the sound of Deborah's footsteps in the hall.

He heard her come, accompanied by another familiar tread. Expectantly, he waited for the doorway to frame her tall, lissom figure, because this had become his favorite view of her. Indeed, she often accused him of playing invalid beyond the bounds of decency just so she might cater to his fancies.

"Colonel Warren, Jonathon," she said, her eyes caressing his face for a moment. "He is fresh from the field of triumph." She turned to their visitor, who, showing embarrassment, followed her awkwardly into the room. "See if you can make him get up, Colonel, whilst I prepare supper."

When she had gone, Colonel Warren uncomfortably approached the bed. "How do you feel?" he asked.

"I'll be about in a week or two," Jonathon replied, saying nothing of the complications which had kept his wound from healing properly. "Sit down, Sam."

"Thank'ee," Warren said, and selected the window chair. He attempted to be jocular. "You really must have impressed the French for them to send you all the way home in a pinnace. Why, the general couldn't have had more attention!"

"That's over, Sam," Jonathon said. He wanted to forget the *Ixion,* even the captain's fuming solicitude upon hearing he had been wounded. That was in the past.

"Yes," the colonel said.

They were silent for several minutes, until, sensing Warren's uneasiness, Jonathon said, "Tell me about it."

Eagerly, Colonel Warren told the story of Yorktown, from the day Washington and Rochambeau got into position, until Cornwallis finally admitted defeat. "I wish you could have been there, Jonathon," Warren said. "It was worth all our years of war."

"Was it, Sam?" Jonathon asked calmly.

Warren looked out the window.

"You didn't put through my resignation, did you?" Jonathon remarked, more as a statement of fact than question.

"No," Colonel Warren confessed.

"That's good," Jonathon said. "I'll be back when I can ride."

Warren delightedly jerked his head about. "I knew—"

"You didn't know," Jonathon interrupted. "I was serious when I resigned, but I've been thinking, Sam. If we want freedom, we've got to stop depending on other people. I've talked it over with Deborah, and I'm coming back. The French won't get Clinton out of New York. That's up to us. Washington needs every man he can get. My affairs can wait until I see the British flag come down over the Battery."

Relieved by the pleasant outcome of what had promised to be a distressing visit, Sam Warren grew enthusiastic. "I'm sorry you missed Yorktown, Jonathon. It would have done your heart good."

"Forget Yorktown," Jonathon advised wearily. "That was just a French sideshow to avoid ending the war before they got what they want in the West Indies. New York will be the real battle."

Of course, Jonathon couldn't always be right.

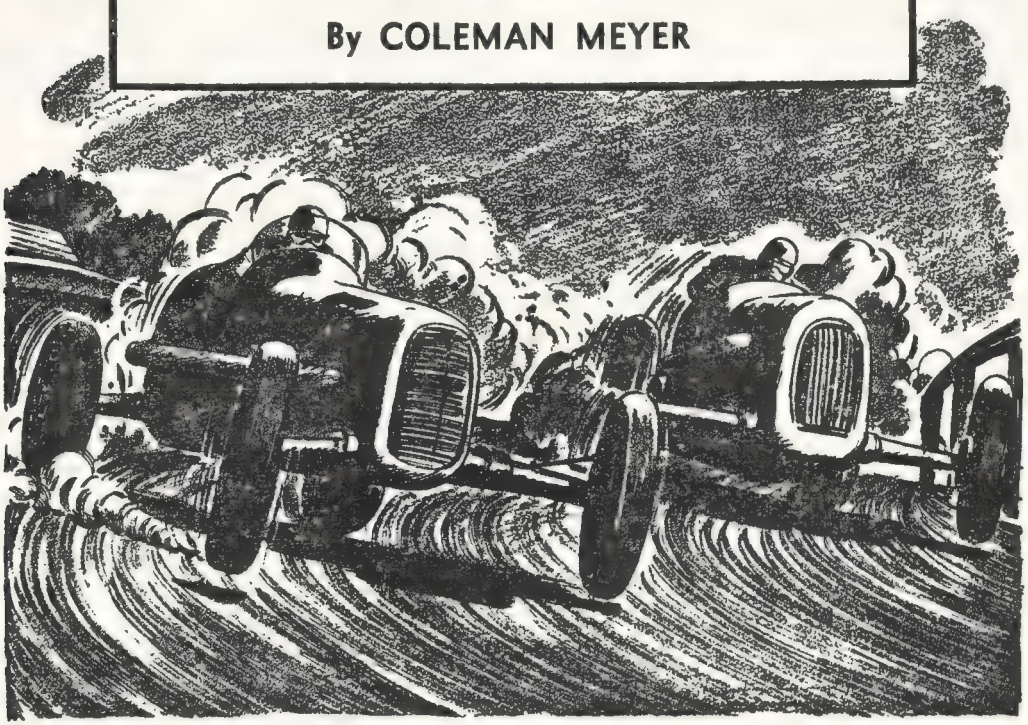
In England, the Whigs who had been steadfastly opposing a Tory war capitalized upon the surrender of a major force to seize the government. The Whigs sued for peace, and while Clinton and Washington watched each other at New York, their governments and allies haggled over terms, de Grasse was captured in a great West Indian battle, and the Colonies were severed forever from England.

Actually, then, whether they wanted to or not, whether Jonathon wished to believe it or not, the French contributed vastly to the cause of American independence.

Jonathon never believed it, particularly on cold winter evenings when he longed for a hot toddy but could not drink because of an old wound in his vitals.

TIME TRIAL

By COLEMAN MEYER



Collie's foot was flat on the floor. Where was that damn flag?

MAGUIRE'S in the stands," Decker, the car owner, said. He drew a sparkplug up with a torque wrench, took the reading with over-elaborate care, as though he was merely making conversation. His once-white coveralls were gray from many washings. A huge *5* was embroidered on the back.

"Yeah," Collison, the driver, replied. "I know."

Decker's gray head hood-buried again. The torque wrench clicked. "He's gonna pick a boy today."

Collison reached into the cockpit of the slim single-seater. He withdrew yellow pigskin gloves, slipped them over his hands, smoothed each finger down carefully. He held the gloves up, scowled at the fit. "Yeah," he said. Then, as an afterthought, "From what?"

Decker unbent from the engine compartment. "I dunno," he shrugged. "Time trials, maybe. Maybe main event."

The yellow-clad fingers went up, pulled the crash helmet strap snug. "Frankie," Collison stated irrelevantly.

"You beat him," Decker said flatly. "Once. This year."

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN MEOLA

"Yeah, once," Collison echoed. "Before he got a new iron. Before he got hot."

"You were hot—for twenty years."

"Time marches on," Collison commented. Then he added, "Why's Maguire making this play?"

"Why does any guy with five million bucks make any play?" Decker said sourly. "Ed Curry, the promoter, is a friend of his." His hand gestured at the racetrack infield and the grandstand, jammed at even this early hour preceding the time trials. "It's a million bucks' worth of publicity for Ed. And it doesn't do so bad for Maguire Oil Company, either. They put two hundred grand of their advertising budget aside this year for a car to run four hundred miles an hour and bring back the world's speed title to America. And he's decided after all considerations that his driver lies somewhere among the five top men of this circuit. So today he picks him."

"Yeah," said Collison. "I know."

"Frankie's good," Decker stated. "You're better. He's green. A green kid."

"Green kids shut off on a corner."

"Not real green. They get in wide open and then can't rake up the savvy to get them out."

Collison hitched up his white duck trousers. The thin-knit blue sweater showed the fine muscling of his body. He flipped back the safety belt, vaulted lightly into the cramped confines of the cockpit. "She ready?" he asked.

Decker's gray eyes regarded him anxiously. "We're not getting any younger, Collie. The guy that drives Maguire's wagon will make a hundred grand with endorsements, radio and all them things. Maybe a test job somewhere."

The yellow-clad fingers pulled the goggle strap forward. Collison's deep-set eyes checked the lenses. "She ready?" he asked.

"Ready," Decker shrugged. "Take twenty-five. Easy. Just enough to run the rings in. She'll be all right after that. Don't stab it—save it for the time trials, just in case . . ."

FRANKIE FOSTER'S pale blue Number One bubbled by on the outside. His white helmet turned. He grinned in friendly fashion and waved as Collie turned low on the apron to give him track room.

The track was the full platter—one mile. Short corners. Long stretches. The fine dirt cushion spread beneath the shushing wheels of Collie's yellow Number Five as he drummed his mile-in-sixty-seconds pace. Once, on the backstretch, he stabbed it, hard. Five threw dirt all over hell and Collie settled back in his seat. Danny Decker knew his business. When he said they were right they were right.

It had been this way for twenty years now; twenty years of bum hotels and joints with carpet on the lobby floor, of paint-peeling county fair grounds and the manicured bricks of Indianapolis. Of the high tide of track records, heavy appearance money and now the backwash of third and fourth places.

The thirds and fourths weren't hard to do. You could still pick up a little appearance money. Just stick around a boy doing forty-five seconds to the mile and lock slide it once or twice and you'd hear the public address announcer apologizing for your bad luck.

But the string was running out. You knew it when you stayed away from the barber for an extra day or so and he'd ask if you wanted it touched up a bit. But you knew it even better when you dove for a corner with the kids. They put their trust in good weight distribution for the first eighty miles an hour and then they borrowed the next ten miles an hour from Him and chucked that in on top.

You couldn't do that any more; the collarbone that ached on damp days, that slight limp, the thin scar just above the face mask of your goggles—your account with Him was slightly overdrawn . . .

A rattle of engine broke Collie's reverie. It wasn't exhaust noise—that would come later. Rather it was cam clatter and sloppy pistons and the general racket of a hot engine. Frankie Foster steamed by on the outside.

Automatically Collie's foot hit the gun. Five woke up with a startled snort, rubber *eekked,* the tachometer swung crazily to the right. Collie was rigid in the seat now, rigid with that tautness of body and looseness of arms that bespoke a thousand racing hours.

The pale blue Number One was ahead —Foster had the revs built up. It blobbed

smoke, like a dot in wireless telegraphy as Foster got set for the slot. Then the cobalt tail flirted sideways.

It was a nice slide and Collie's helmet was nodding approvingly even as he matched the routine. Five's rear deck slid out. Squalling rubber threw twin, narrow dirt-spumes over the crash rail. Two hundred horsepower tugged at the reins as his yellow-clad fingers gentled the front end.

He caught Foster on the back stretch, matched him revolution for revolution. The turn came racing back at them. Collie glanced at the motionless figure in the cockpit alongside. Foster's lips were curled in a half grin.

There was a limp green cloth tacked to a post before the corner. An outside post. It was his. His and Danny Decker's. Before each meet they put two up, one on each stretch.

"When I go by that with the gun flat on the floor," Collie had said grimly, "somebody's gonna get hurt."

Half the stretch, the engines insane madhouses of mechanical frenzy, wheel and wheel. The tach was in the red sector. The corner came rocketing back.

Then the collarbone, the limp and the scar pulled Collie's foot off the floor at the green-flagged post.

Foster never moved. One seemed to leap at the turn, crossed in a swift slide. For an instant the slide wobbled as though the outward shoving forces were too great. Collie's hand flashed for the brake, a rapid glance gauged the infield for an escape road. Then One's power came full on. The blue car, dancing-light, simply smothered the corner.

Collie kicked the stub lever out of gear, braked it down for the pits. Five pitched bumpily over the uneven infield, stiff-springed for her pit stall.

Decker eyed him curiously, wiping his hands on a greasy rag.

Collie hoisted himself free of the cockpit, stripped the yellow gloves from his fingers, searched his pockets for a cigarette.

Decker said, in a very soft voice, "You let him go?"

Collie held the match flame, looking down at his hand. The palm was damp with sweat. "Yeah," he answered heavily. "Yeah. I let him go."

IT WAS quarter after two when the bombshell fell.

Collie was out of the infield and under the stands when he heard the roar from the seats above. He finished the coke, carefully deposited the bottle back in the rack and sauntered back to the pit.

"You hear it, Collie?" Decker demanded anxiously. "You hear it? No trophy dash before the start. You're number three in qualifying time. The P. A. guy just said the trophy dash would be held just before the main event. And Maguire just said that, barring accidents in the event, the winner of the dash would get a bid to drive the Big Goat—the four-hundred-miler outfit!" He wiped his hands on a rag, threw it away, absently rubbed his palms across the once-white coveralls.

Collie didn't answer. Something had happened to his stomach. It was churning over and over. Like it was full of butterflies. After a while he said, "I'm three. It's Frankie then. And who else?" He was surprised at the evenness of his voice.

"Bull," Decker replied. "Bull Jensen." He was picking up tools and laying them down again in his agitation. "Bull's all right. You can take care of him."

"Yeah," said Collie. "I can take care of him."

The afternoon passed in a blur. Collie remembered vaguely a wait at the starting line, some noise from the public address horns. Then there were engines and finally somebody dropped a flag. Twenty years of conditioned reflexes went to work and Collie's strong hands and deft toe ran Five through the first corner in the heat . . .

A hundred thousand bucks maybe. Anyhow, enough to sit on the high peak of retirement and be introduced at all the speedways as, ". . . Former great champion now representing Maguire Oil Company . . ." To get away from this churning in your stomach and the bum hotels and that always ever-present tomorrow of another race-meet where you couldn't be a *former* but had to get in there and pitch against the kids.

My God! The kids! Frankie would be in the dash. Frankie with that half smile of his, just like he enjoyed chucking fourteen hundred pounds of iron into a corner

twenty miles an hour faster than it could be made.

A green rag obtruded on his vision. His foot lifted, sought power after a proper interval. Five cocked obediently, rode the corner in a smooth slide. There was another period of straightaway. This time his foot lifted at a cloth on the wire grandstand fence a hundred yards before the turn.

The grandstand turn was unseeingly smooth. But it was a job of work being done by Collie's hands and Collie's foot. Five leapt onto the back stretch. He passed somebody else there. Then the semaphoring green cloth pulled his foot up. He waited a moment, then crossed for the slide.

Pretty soon it was all over and he was in the pit. Decker's hand was on his shoulder. "Nice going, Collie. That's the old form, boy."

Collie sat on the heavy, white-washed board that spaced the pit stalls. "Yeah," he said. "But none of those guys was Frankie."

"You got it, Collie," Decker insisted with stubborn loyalty. "You ain't lost a thing. You can take him. Easy."

Collie shook his head. "I ran that one on the flags. Frankie Foster don't shut off there."

Decker paused, eyed him narrowly. "It's the big chance, Collie. Two and a half minutes of the old form would do it. Flags or no flags. I know you can do it. Then—" his thumb jerked at the rows of nosed-in tail jobs—"no more of this."

Collie got up heavily. His eyes sought the small, square building just outside the wire fence that spaced the infield from the pits. "Maybe," he said. "Maybe." Then he headed for the building.

He felt like he was going to be sick.

BULL had the pole position.

Collie didn't care. For that matter he didn't care about anything. Bull wasn't too hard to handle. They'd run together for fifteen years and Bull was just about as good as they came in crash helmets and shatterproof goggles. But Bull was getting heavy and he was getting lazy. And when it got too hot Bull just said t'hell with it and moved over and let somebody get a gold star for the family flag. Bull had Number Three and the yellow and chrome glinted in the sun.

Frankie was on the outside. And Frankie was hot as a steam-locked cylinder head. Collie looked around as the speaker horns went through an endless introduction—"Three laps, Ladies and Gentlemen, three laps and three men! . . . For what is probably the richest purse in racing history . . . A hundred thousand dollar chance for the winner, for driving the Maguire Special will be worth all of that . . ." The announcer had evidently been busy with his pencil and Collie felt vaguely annoyed. ". . . Perhaps a thousand dollars a second for this trophy dash, Ladies and Gentlemen . . ."

Decker wasn't at his elbow and Collie felt suddenly alone. Only one man in whites was here, a stranger. Danny had said shortly, "Nothing I can do, Collie. You'll be on your own."

Then the introduction was over and Collie was only aware of it as the tow-roadster jerked the line.

Bull had the pole. That would mean a good start. He could beat Bull to the corner. Five had more steam, more dig-out. If he could beat Frankie to the corner maybe it wouldn't be so bad. Three laps don't give a hell of a lot of time for a guy to find the slot. If Frankie went wide in the soft stuff . . .

Then suddenly his stomach ceased its churning and his mind ceased its wandering. Four thousand revs for a start, at least for the dive off the bank and down for the starting flag. And he suddenly felt affection for Bull. Bull had already said t'hell with this and was holding the start down to a point where Collie could use Five's terrific acceleration.

Still four thousand. Then the flag went down. Collie held it down to the green cloth, left the power on a moment longer. He had half a length on Frankie going through the corner. Held it. The chips weren't down yet. The next corner was it. Where you'd get in with your foot on the floor and all the burners lit.

The back stretch run was started from out of the slide. Collie stabbed it. The tach started for the red sector. Five bundled her wheels under her and seemed to leap straight into the air.

Halfway down Frankie pulled out of draft, that vacuum area behind, pulled

even and stayed there. Collie's lips were drawn back from his teeth. Frankie was pegged, too. That's all he had and Five was matching the cobalt car inch for inch.

The tach crossed six thousand, headed for seven. The twin engines hit the point of synchronism. It seemed to shake the metal on both cars. The corner was leaping back at them with frightening speed. The engines were screeching, yammering things of mechanical torture, pouring thin notes from chrome stacks.

Collie eased toward the tiny windscreen, body tense, strong fingers easy on the wheel. Where was that damn flag? He'd run it past just a little, try it a little faster . . .

Three-quarter point on the stretch. His foot was flat on the floor. Where *was* that damn flag? It should be here—that limp rag of green cloth . . . God Almighty!

Then the blue car slid rearward from his vision and he was suddenly in the corner . . .

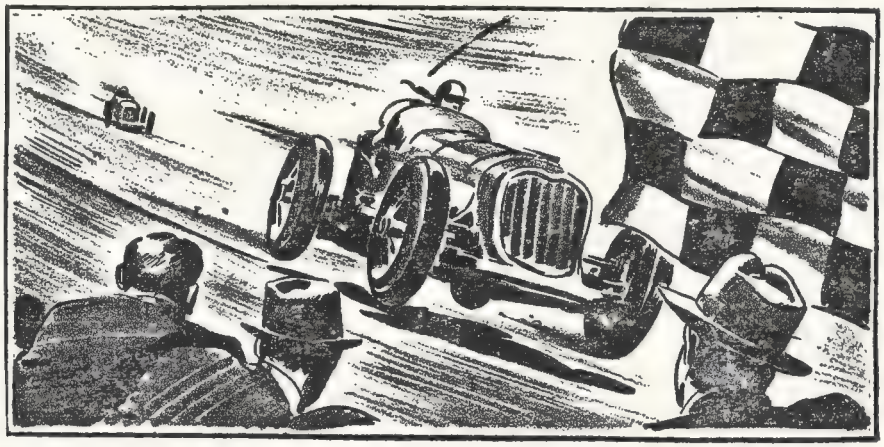
They wrote about it afterward. Probably you read about it in some of the books. But Decker told it best—Decker in his new blue suit and with his fat cigar and his fatter job with Maguire Oil.

"They never saw anything like it," he crowed. "There was twenty years of racing flowing through his fingers and mebbe a hundred thousand corners under that right toe of his.

"Collie took it in right against the pin. Absolutely wide open. Then he breathes her, right in the slot. Not off the gun, you'll understand—that puts 'em over the fence—just breathes her. He's got all four wheels sliding and, if you gotta good ear, you can hear it; Five's mill is playing like an organ. Full power until the rear deck starts to get away from him. Then it softens—not much, just enough to keep the back end offa the fence and out of a spin. Then Collie comes back on it when the front end starts to get away from him. Then—when he gets the front end holding, just a little bit, he has to put it right against the pine to keep the tail sliding. I tell you—it was the greatest thing they ever saw on a racetrack. Mebbe it *was* three laps for a hundred grand; Collie ran it like they was paying a million bucks an inch . . ."

Prod him just a little. "Finished the same way? Hell, yes! He ran Frankie's rubber right down to the rims! I knew Collie had it all the time. He was just getting stale and beat down from too many years of racing. All he needed was one good corner—to get into one wide open and find out that he still had the old moxie it took to get out the same way, to find out that it didn't get you new scars and another limp every time you tried it."

And then—if you'd ask the logical question—Decker would squint, grin and spread his fat hands in a modest disclaimer. "Naw, I didn't have nothing to do with it. I just kept the car up. Of course—" here he'd usually pause for effect—"I'm the neat type, you see. So I went around while they was lining up for the dash and pulled that damn green flag offa the back stretch fence . . ."



Sand did not see the explosion—he closed his eyes to its white-hot flash.

DYNAMITE DETOUR

By

C. HALL THOMPSON

THE waystation was situated twenty yards off the road in a hollow in the mountainside. It was not a bad building. It had been built when the highway was in general use and someone had meant it to be a gas station, because holes had been drilled out front for tanks. Now the holes were flooded; the puddles were pocked by the rain that was still falling. Inside, the building was damp; a crack in one plaster wall let in a little of the storm. But with the stove going and the sound of voices, the place got warmer and less lonely. It wasn't just an empty shack. It was a Company waystation with Company men in it.

Sand stood by the window that looked eastward; he listened to the drumming of rain in a puddle on the rotted sill. From the window you could see the ravine the way it dropped sharply beyond the white edge of mountain highway; the bridge was a wet skeleton against the leaden sky. It looked like any other bridge in the world. It did not look as though it might cost lives.

Behind him, he could hear Rinaldi and Farrell talking, but the words reached him only as a meaningless collection of sounds. It was the same with Doyle; he knew Doyle was at the wall-phone; he could hear the toll of coins and then Doyle's voice; clear, but very far away and somehow lonely. Sand stared at the bridge.

ILLUSTRATED BY JULIAN G. CHAMBERS

"You want I should deal you in, Lucky?" Rinaldi said.

Sand turned from the window; even in firelight he looked pale. He smiled. "'Lucky', he says . . ."

The two men who sat on either side of an upturned crate laughed. Doyle yelled for them to keep it quiet. He leaned against one wall, the receiver jammed to his ear; he passed a hand over his eyes as

if they were blurred and would not clear. Farrell fanned his fingers on the crate-top and used a nailfile; he blew away white filings and shined the nails on his denim sleeve.

Sand stayed by the window. He didn't want to get close to the light. He was sweating; he knew it was nerves because the room wasn't hot even with the fire going.

"You don't feel lucky tonight?" Rinaldi scratched his black mustache; he dealt. Doyle's voice ran on tonelessly. The cards made a snicking noise.

"I don't feel lucky at all," Sand said.

Nobody laughed. The words fell flat in too much silence. Farrell studied the nail of his little finger. He bit off a quick and spat it out.

"We're all lucky," he said. "We been lucky as hell."

"All right." Rinaldi fanned the cards irritably. "We been lucky."

"Well, we ain't had no accidents, lately—not since Underman lost control on the hairpin outside L. A." Farrell frowned at his manicured hand. "When I think of Underman, I still say we've been damned lucky."

"So far," Sand said.

"Maybe you'd like to change your name?" Rinaldi gave his hand the once-over. "Maybe we should call you Crepe-hanger."

"We'll have to cross that bridge," Sand said. "I got a feeling . . ."

Doyle's voice got louder. They listened. It was nothing but yes and no and thank you. They stopped listening. Sand shook his head.

"Cross a rickety bridge in the rain with a truckload of nitro . . ."

"You should worry." Rinaldi dealt Farrell one and took three himself. "You're lucky."

"He's got a jane," Farrell said. "Little Irisher back in Frisco . . . Forget it, kid. They're all the same. So, what if you don't see her again . . . ?"

"Shut up," Sand told him. He was sweating again; a nerve in his eyelid twitched.

Doyle banged up the receiver. He wiped his palms on khaki pantlegs. He came to the crate. He rubbed his eyes; in firelight, they looked very tired and red. His heavy shoulders were stooped. He looked older than forty-eight. He looked from Sand to the others.

"Let him be," he said.

"Let me alone," Sand said thickly. "That's all."

Doyle sat on an upended box. He scratched his gray hair over the ear. "Deal me in."

SAND stared at the worn face. He wanted to say thanks, but it was something you never put into words. You only felt it and were grateful because someone knew how it was with you. He smiled. Good old Doyle. Doyle, who had seen him through the early runs; Doyle, who had stepped between him and hell by taking the wheel when he froze on it that first time rounding the hairpin north of L.A.; Doyle who always argued that Sand had the makings of an A-1 driver. Sure, Doyle had had faith from the start; he still had it. Sand swallowed. For Doyle, he thought—maybe I can do it for him, stop being afraid and face the bridge. He believes in me; it ought to stay that way . . .

Farrell shuffled. Rinaldi looked at Doyle. "You get through?"

Doyle shook his head. "L.A. operator said the line was busy. They'll call back when they get Somerset."

Nobody said anything for a while. Doyle looked at Farrell. "You going to shuffle the spots off?"

Farrell dealt. Sand went to the window and stared out at the rusted bridge; its spots of red-lead patching showed clear through heavy rain. He tried to keep his voice relaxed.

"Do you think we'll have to cross the bridge, Al?"

Doyle said, "The bridge'll take care of itself when the time comes."

Sand turned too sharply.

"When the time comes? What're we waiting for? That damn thing gets weaker by the minute."

Doyle kept looking at the cards.

"You know there's another route." His voice was quiet. "Give me time to check with Somerset. Maybe we can take the valley road."

Sand's mouth worked, no more words came. He twisted back to the window. Nobody looked at him.

Rinaldi said, "Come on, kid. Play a few

hands. It won't do no good just looking at it."

Sand came and sat down; he wanted to return Doyle's reassuring stare; he couldn't. He watched Doyle manipulate the cards; the fingers moved with practiced dexterity. Farrell lit a cigarette and let out smoke.

"Anyway," he said, "maybe Somerset'll tell us to lay over altogether, till after the storm." He liked the idea; he kept playing with it. "Sure. We'll tell him, take pity on Al's dizzy spells. He wouldn't want anything to happen to Doyley."

He stopped—Doyle was looking at him too steadily.

Doyle said in a toneless voice, "I told you drop it about my dizzy spells."

"O.K."

"Why don't you blab to the Company? Go on, tell Somerset. Get me canned into a lousy desk-job."

"Take it easy, Al. I was just saying . . ."

Doyle kept riffling the cards irritably. The lined face wasn't calm any more; there was anger in the eyes that did not look at anyone. The mouth was hard Sand thought, the old firehorse, still running at the bell, never wanting to stop for breath because somebody might catch on and say it coldly, definitely: He's too old for the job. And the words would be an end of something, of excitement and being young and the satisfaction of a job he had done better than anyone else for fifteen years . . .

"They ain't dizzy spells, anyway," Doyle said. "Just, lately, my eyes get tired."

"O.K.," Farrell said. "O.K.! So, Somerset'll pity all of us . . . Deal."

Sand arranged his cards, trying to make them mean something. It wouldn't work. There was nothing in front of him but the bridge. Rinaldi laughed at something he'd been thinking about. It wasn't a humorous laugh.

"Somerset and pity," he said. "That's a hot combination. He never heard of the word. Somerset is Company. Anything for the Company." Rinaldi shrugged. "What's a few blowups to him? A bridge, a wet road, blooey, they make toothpicks out of you. What's Somerset care?"

Farrell stared at his immaculate nails. "I don't like toothpicks, they're a dirty habit."

"All right," Rinaldi said. "Out of you, they'll make matches. Fancy matches to light fancy cigarettes for fancy ladies."

"Toothpicks, matches . . ." Farrell frowned. "Wouldn't be enough left."

"Oh hell, shut up!" Sand jolted to his feet. Rinaldi and Farrell looked surprised. Doyle had the sense not to stare at him. He went to the window.

"Look," Rinaldi said. "You better take it easy."

"Let him be," Doyle said. "Didn't I say let him be?"

"All right." Rinaldi's voice got loud. "He's your boy, you can have him. But, even if we do have to cross, it's only a bridge."

"Not to him," Doyle said. "To him, it's special. It's the first bridge."

The game went on; nobody talked. Outside in the downpour, the bridge got more vague and dangerous-looking; a higher wind shoved loose weeds along the highway edge and down into the steep ravine. Sand looked at the unsure trusses and cables and thought: Doyle has it. Somehow Doyle always had it, every question and answer all sewed up in a neat package of understanding. He was something you could fall back on, sure of being caught and straightened out. Now, in this business of the bridge, Doyle had it again.

It wasn't an ordinary bridge. It looked ordinary; it looked like the bridge you took into the shore road in South Jersey. Only it wasn't what it looked like. He had a personal option on this bridge; it was his to cross, nobody else's. Dear Jesus Christ, let me cross it, his mind said. For Al, yes, at least let me show him he's right to believe in me. Not that bridge out there; the bridge here inside me; that's the one I have to cross.

Why can't you be like the others? he asked himself. They know how it is; there is a time when you cross and you are not green any more; when you can say to hell with it, come day go day God send Sunday. The others were afraid, but they had learned to live with the fear and laugh at it. They had crossed their bridges . . .

THE telephone rang. Rinaldi stopped dealing. Farrell stopped counting pennies. Sand turned around; his cheekbones and forehead looked damp. The three of them

looked at Doyle. The phone rang for the fourth time.

"L.A.," Doyle said to nobody.

He went to the corner. The receiver rattled. They stopped looking at him. Rinaldi and Farrell studied their hands. Sand kept staring at Doyle. The words came dry and flat.

"Mr. Somerset? Doyle. Listen, we're at the Carson bridge. Yeah. It's in a hell of a shape. Wind's torn the left truss near the foundation on our side. Whole weight's on the cable and that's going fast. What? No. I wouldn't. The load of a truck's liable to snap the cable *and* the right truss. Those joint-rivets ain't worth a damn . . . Look, why don't we take the valley road?"

The tide of talk changed. The sounds Doyle made were one-end-of-the-conversation words. They didn't help any.

"I see," he told the mouthpiece. "On schedule. Right. Goodbye."

They waited. Doyle came back to the crate; his feet made a tired rhythm on the floor. He drew a hand across his eyes and began snapping shut the buttons of his leather jacket.

Finally, he said, "The valley road's washed out."

Rinaldi squinted through smoke. "So? What do we do?"

"We cross the bridge. Storm or no storm, we cross. Somerset is a busy man; Somerset has requisitions to fill. We must give him his nitro on schedule." He snapped the last button. "Oh, he's a very busy man."

"The bastard," Farrell said. "These lousy backroads . . ."

Rinaldi shrugged. "Study law at city college; they got it written in the books: 'Explosives forbidden to endanger regular traffic routes.' "

Nobody said anything. Sand leaned against the windowsill; the sweating coldness was inside now and in the stomach, making him physically sick. The pie and coffee he had had in the last hamburger joint didn't taste so good the second time around. He felt dizzy. He could not see clearly. Then, the faces and voices went very far away and there was nothing but the sourness in his stomach. He turned to the wall. You could not hear him, but you could see the thin shoulders retching. He sagged against the sill and shuddered. He was sick again. Rinaldi started to speak; Doyle shook his head. He nodded at the door. After a while, Sand could hear only the quiet breathing of Doyle behind him.

"One way to make an ass of yourself," he said thickly.

"You ain't got a patent on it." Doyle lit a cigarette and gave it to him.

"I'll be all right." Sand inhaled; the smoke felt fuzzy in the sick hollow of his stomach. He didn't inhale again. "I better get out there," he said. "The trucks'll be ready."

"Look, kid. Why don't you let me take this run across for you?"

"No. I'm all right now."

"Maybe next time you'll feel better. Maybe you got a hunch you shouldn't take this first run."

Sand looked at the floor; he dropped the cigarette and ground it out.

"Everybody gets hunches," Doyle said quietly.

"I don't know." He didn't look at Doyle. "Maybe that's it."

That wasn't it; he knew that wasn't it. He told himself he was a yellow bastard and he was letting Doyle down. He told himself he had to cross; sooner or later, he had to—it might as well be now. He did not say anything. He let Doyle do the talking.

"Then why not let me take your place?" Doyle said.

Sand shook his head doubtfully. "No, I better . . ."

"Look," Doyle cut in quietly. "Tell you what. We'll ace out. First ace takes both your truck and mine across the bridge . . . O.K.?"

Sand watched the easy grin. He watched Doyle's sure hands riffle the cards. He knew what was coming. Doyle could make the cards say uncle. You didn't have to guess. You knew how the ace would fall. Sand knew. He did not say anything. The fear was too tight in him.

"All right," he managed finally. "First ace."

Supple fingers moved, cards whimpered. A seven for him, a jack for Doyle, a deuce for him, a five for Doyle, a queen for him. The ace of hearts for Doyle. It wasn't even subtle. Sand told himself he oughtn't to let it go. He knew he would.

Doyle smiled and tossed the cards on

the crate. He put on his cap and snuffed out the cigarette.

"They named you right, Lucky." He poked Sand's arm lightly. "You'll feel better next time. Always best to play a hunch."

"Yeah."

At the door, Doyle turned. Cold sweat stood out under Sand's eyes. Doyle winked.

"See you on the other side."

Sand nodded. With Doyle gone, he felt terribly alone. The storm had not slackened; wind still came up harshly through the divide and splashed rain against the window in angry gusts. But the noise of it seemed distant now and very melancholy. The rumbling of the trucks outside made calcimine shower from the ceiling in small white puffs.

Sand opened the door.

IT WAS no better outside. Rain made silver diagonals in the glare of truck headlamps. There was no moon. The bridge was only a dark framework against the paler gray mountain wall, and now, in the open, you could hear the storm whining through cables and superstructure. The left truss clanged mournfully, freed by wind and corroded rivets. His head hunched in his collar, Rinaldi stood by Farrell's truck. Farrell was behind the wheel. To the rear, Doyle was in the cab of Sand's truck. Rinaldi yelled something about getting across quick, extra weight would play hell with those cables. Farrell swore.

"Stinking backroads!"

"In the books," Rinaldi said over the rain. "Remember? Take back roads and make toothpicks . . ."

Doyle sounded his horn; Farrell let in the clutch.

"Tell them I never liked those damned toothpicks."

"Matches, baby. For you it'll be matches."

Farrell couldn't have heard him; the truck was already under way.

Sand stood on the waystation doorsill; he could see Doyle in the shadow of the cab, drawing his fingers across his eyes. He could feel Rinaldi looking at him with the question in his dark face but Rinaldi did not put it into words. And then all three of them were not conscious of each other, only of the iron-gray beetle that was Farrell's truck inching along the macadam until loose bridge planks rattled with an empty sound under its front wheels. The truck crawled out a few yards and slithered once on the wet wood and Rinaldi said Jesu, Giuseppe, Maria and finally Farrell gave it the gun, straight and sure, down the center of the bridge lane. He wasn't wasting time; even the idea of matches didn't appeal to him. He was across then and the bridge was empty, the shattered truss groaning, the cables whining nastily, and Sand breathed again. But only for a moment. As Farrell's rear wheels touched the other side, Doyle threw Sand's truck into gear. It rolled forward slowly and Sand stood there watching the watery tail-light, and wishing Rinaldi would quit staring at him like that.

He felt sick again. The truck moved out onto the bridge like a wary animal, stalking a trap, trailing a foxtail of exhaust along the rainsoaked road, and inside his head he could hear a voice that was his own praying silently. A wilder rush of wind came along the ravine; strained cables, bearing weight meant to be borne by the broken truss, shrilled in dangerous labor pains. Planks rattled. The truck was about halfway across when it skidded gently and stopped dead.

Rinaldi said, "What the hell," in a flat voice.

The truck did not move; the door did not open; no head was poked out of the window. The loose truss tolled against a girder; one of the cables quivered; some of its wire wrapping had come free and sang a nasal song in the rain and wind. They watched and it seemed the bridge frame shuddered. At the base on their side a boulder dislodged and crashed into the black divide. Unsteadily, Sand walked to Rinaldi's side; neither of them stopped looking at the truck. Rinaldi clenched his fists.

"What's he waiting for? Why the hell don't he move?"

Sand didn't say anything; the metallic clash of the truss and girder rang above the storm.

"The crazy bastard'll kill himself," Rinaldi said. "A few more minutes of that weight on those cables and blooey."

Sand swallowed. "What's the matter with him?"

"How should I know? I'm a mind-reader?" Rinaldi kicked at soggy earth and swore. "Dizzy spells! I told him they'd get him, yet. No—he had to stick to the trucks. He didn't want a nice soft desk-job."

"Wait a minute. You think he's got a spell? Now?"

"Why the hell else would he stop in the middle of a toothpick bridge?"

Sand stood quite still. Only a minute before, everything had been terribly complicated, and now, suddenly, it was very simple, like a basic geometrical theorem, and it was not being afraid or unafraid, it was not something to which you could put words like heroism or cowardice; it was just this rickety bridge in the night rain and a nitro truck on it and in the truck a swell guy named Doyle. That was the important part. This guy named Doyle, alone out there, with dizziness blinding him and nothing but minutes between him and Rinaldi's toothpicks; the guy who taught you all the tricks; the guy who saved your neck on a hairpin outside L.A. and covered all your mistakes, and even in the end, shielded your fear with a polite name like hunch. And it could not be that way—not for a swell guy like Doyle.

It was that simple.

He was moving now and the legs were still watery under him, only he did not have time to notice them, any more than he had time to listen to Rinaldi. The Italian hands were gesturing and Rinaldi yelled after him, "Ay walyo! You nuts? You can't go out there. One more pound and that thing'll cave into the ravine . . . Ay . . . Wait a minute, kid . . ."

He did not feel heroic; he felt sick with being afraid even now, but there was something bigger than the fear in him. Something that made him move out from the safety of the roadbed onto the first soaked plank of the bridge. The clang of the splintered truss was too close and like a funeral bell in the storm; rain slashed down through the divide, through the red-lead-pocked network of girders. Loose mud sagged and sucked hungrily under the bridge foundation; another clod slagged away into the darkness below. The superstructure shuddered. Even with cold rain against his face, he was sweating; it was an inner clammy sweat that bathed the tightness in his chest.

It took a lifetime—it took more than that, every step was a lifetime. The truck seemed to get no nearer; the raveling cable flapped violently and screamed; the rotted planks sagged suddenly a fraction to the left. He stopped breathing. The truck slithered a foot toward the iron guardrail and was still. Somewhere behind him he could hear Rinaldi yelling for God's sake take it easy, and far away at the other end of the bridge Farrell stood gaping. Sand breathed again; he made the truck.

DOYLE'S head was spilled forward against the steering wheel; he moaned softly, he did not move. Sand opened the door. It was a slow business, getting Doyle to lean halfway out, clutching one arm and one leg.

Sand took a deep breath; the crippled truss clanged. The rain was heavier, he could not really see. He had only a general sense of direction. Abruptly, he heaved Doyle's bulk upward on his shoulders; planks rattled under the shifting weight, Rinaldi let out a loud curse at the complaining cables and then he, Sand, was no longer taking it inch by inch, he was running—that was all there was time left to do. He had a crazy impulse to laugh, because ahead, vaguely, he could see Farrell tense, bent forward, and it was suddenly like trying for a home run with the whole team cheering on the backlot when he was a kid.

The cable splintered and broke clean and then, at the foundation, something heavier than the cable; the superstructure groaned and spilled leftward like an uprooted tree and as his feet caught solid ground Farrell screamed "Duck!" and behind him the truck-tires whimpered, skidding. He did not see the explosion; he closed his eyes to its white-hot flashbulb and the three of them were there, piled against each other, crowding into weeds in the lee of the mountain wall; rocks and dirt showered. A stone grazed Sand's cheek; for a minute he was unable to hear anything. In the end, there was only the shuddering silence that followed the blast, and Farrell, beside him, sitting up very

slowly. A smell of scorched damp earth rose from the ravine; Farrell's big face worked, staring from Doyle to Sand, until the lips had bent in a shaken grin.

"Jesus," Farrell said thickly. "Of all the crazy kids . . . "

Sand did not look at him. His neck felt hot and it was not a bad feeling. He could hear Rinaldi on the other side of the steaming divide, yelling his lungs out like a kid at a parade. He looked at Doyle. The big head was lolling back and forth, then the eyes opened. Doyle looked vague. He pushed himself to a half-sitting position against the wet wall; he shook his head to clear it and stared at what had been the bridge. There was not much left.

The twisted girders made crazy pretzel patterns against the sky; small splinters of wood still fluttered in the wet air. A tireless truckwheel, caught on a warped truss, spun slowly to a halt. The smoke burned their nostrils. Doyle kept staring. Finally the words came.

"Funny about bridges," he said hoarsely. "They mean so many different things to so many different guys . . . "

They were not ordinary words because they went down inside you and now watching Doyle's sooty face, Sand felt them inside himself, explaining to him, and he knew the bridge had not been his alone. Somehow, it had belonged to Doyle, too. They both had to get to the other side. For him it meant a beginning, but for Doyle it was that end of something he had always tried to sidestep, the realization that the traces were really getting too heavy and would have to be shed, and now it had been done. The bridge had been crossed. For a time, Doyle's mouth looked stiff, the eyes were dark—then, very slowly, the face softened. The heavy shoulders heaved in a sigh as if maybe it was good to be free of the traces after all, and maybe the meadow was a little better than you had ever expected. The smile was vaguely sad but comfortable. Doyle turned it on Sand.

"Little fireworks, eh?"

"Little," Sand said. He looked at Doyle for a long minute and then gave a funny confidential wink. "Thanks," he said quietly.

Doyle looked away. He ran a finger under his dirtsmeared nose. He grinned up at Farrell.

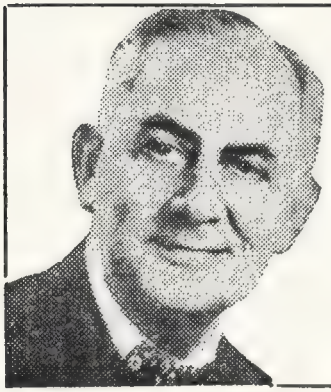
"The kid here flatters himself, eh, Harry?"

Farrell let out a nervous laugh.

"Tell him," Doyle said wryly. "Go on. Tell him in his condition an accident was a cinch—it was suicide. Besides, it was a sure loss of a good truck . . . " The smile turned back to Sand. "No sentiment, kid. No sloppy stuff. Me—I always save a good truck. All I need now is that desk-job and I'm another Somerset. I'm a Company man."

Sand nodded. "So you have a dizzy spell on Company time?"

They all laughed. The smoke was clearing slowly and now they were laughing together, a good sure laughter that was outside and above doubt and fear. Sand stood there, feeling the laughter in him and the certainty that the sick sweating afraidness was gone, and if he turned now, like Doyle, he could see clearly the twisted, beaten rubble of the bridge that lay behind him.



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Bull Elk flatly declined to surrender and Dickens decided to make his arrest a personal affair—he tackled the big Indian.

CHARLES DICKENS' SON —INDIAN-FIGHTER

A FACT STORY

IT'S a far cry from the book-and-manuscript-littered study in foggy London—where Charles Dickens scrawled with a goose-quill pen such immortal novels as "Nicholas Nickleby," "Pickwick" and "Oliver Twist"—to the windswept plains of Saskatchewan where Inspector Francis Dickens of the North-West Mounted Police—Indian-fighting son of the famous author—led his little detachment of troopers against bow-and-arrow-armed bands of Cree and Blackfeet hostiles.

Today, wherever the English language is read or spoken, the father's great delineations of nineteenth century life and character are familiar to thousands. But the world has forgotten—few ever knew—about the obscure but gallant military career of the son, and the part he played in the policing of the Canadian Northwest.

Francis Jeffreys Dickens was one of the older sons of the novelist. From his earliest youth his heart was set on a military career and immediately he had done with

By WILLIAM B. CAMERON

school and books his father secured for him a commission as captain in the British Army and he sailed for India. Here he served for ten years and as the result of a sunstroke sustained in that torrid region he was left permanently more than a little deaf. Following his father's death in 1870, as he told me many years later, he received a legacy of 12,000 pounds, which he promptly invested "in indigo." After another two years he was informed that his investment had been wiped out and he resigned his commission and returned to England. The loss of his money was probably the main reason for his quitting the Army, although his deafness may have been a contributing factor.

In London he obtained letters to Sir John A. Macdonald, then premier of Canada, and on his arrival in Ottawa was appointed by the Canadian prime minister an inspector in the then recently-organized North-West Mounted Police. He traveled west and was for a time stationed at Forts Macleod and Walsh located in southern Alberta.

During his stay at Fort Macleod an incident occurred which created a dangerous situation and might very well have ended in tragedy.

At Blackfoot Crossing on the Bow river, 60 miles east of the tiny frontier hamlet of Fort Calgary, the main camp and reserve of the Blackfeet under the head chief, Crowfoot, was located. Here the Department of Indian Affairs kept a large herd of range cattle and a ration-issuer to distribute beef to the Indians, a fixed number being slaughtered each week. A huge Indian named Bull Elk had presumably concluded that to fill comfortably the collective tribal stomach the weekly quota of beef was inadequate and that something should be done about it; he therefore decided to do a little slaughtering on his own account.

The authorities frowned on Bull Elk's laudable attempt to step up the living standard of his people and Inspector Dickens was sent with a detail from Fort Macleod to the Crossing to take Bull Elk into custody and bring him to Macleod for trial. But Bull Elk flatly declined to surrender to the police or to accompany the inspector to Macleod and Dickens decided to make his arrest a personal affair. He tackled Bull Elk.

Now Dickens was a small man, Bull Elk in the heavyweight class, and though he put his whole heart into the effort as well as his strength, he was unable to put the handcuffs on the big Indian. Meanwhile Bull Elk's fellow-tribesmen, who were backing their champion to win, made things decidedly unpleasant for the handful of police.

They whooped and shouted vociferous encouragement to the battler in the redman's cause and sent bullets whizzing over the heads of the contestants as they circled the arena on their racing ponies. In the end Dickens was forced to throw in the sponge and await the arrival of the reinforcements he had summoned by courier from Macleod, but only after he had been knocked down. Ultimately there was a sizeable section of "The Force" on the ground and Major Crozier, in command of the reinforcements, notified Crowfoot that if Bull Elk was not surrendered by noon next day he would be taken by force. One of the buildings had been converted into a temporary fort, with sacks of flour for breastworks, and precautions were taken against surprise. These preparations overawed the Indians. Though many in number they hesitated to provoke a serious crisis.

Bull Elk surrendered next day without resistance, was tried and sentenced by Commissioner James Macleod of the Police to a term in the guardroom. And so ended without bloodshed the episode of Blackfoot Crossing.

A budding cartoonist in the frontier village of Calgary made a sketch of Dickens and the Indians at the peak of the struggle which kept the populace laughing for a week. This masterpiece showed Bull Elk with his feet on the ground, Dickens with his in the air. And the legend beneath it read: "Hang onto him, Dickie!" Dickens at the Crossing was in much the same fix as the trapper who tackled a wildcat and was yelling to his partner for aid. "Stay with him, Jake!" shouted Bill. "I'm comin'. I'll help you hold him."

"Hold hell!" returned Jake disgustedly. "What I need's somebody to help me let go."

There may be an odd old-timer still around Calgary who will recall that work of art and the big kick the inhabitants got out of it.

LATER Dickens was transferred to Battleford, first capital of Canada's North-West Territory, and from there to Fort Pitt, ninty miles west, on the North Saskatchewan River, in command of a detachment of twenty-five men. It was here I first met the captain in 1884. I have two pictures taken at the fort in that year by a traveling photographer in both of which Dickens appears. In one he is standing in civilian garb arm in arm with Tom Quinn, the Indian agent (first victim of the Frog Lake massacre six months later) ; in the other he is in uniform on parade with his Fort Pitt detachment. Fort Pitt was district headquarters post of the Hudson's Bay Company, under the administration of Chief Trader W. J. McLean. Dickens had rooms on the second floor of "The Big House," the chief trader's residence, and had his meals with that officer and his family and the Company staff. He was a quiet man and seldom did much talking. The men of the police detachment were quartered in other Company buildings.

I was at this time with the Hudson's Bay Company at Frog Lake, thirty-five miles from Pitt, and usually spent two or three days at headquarters each month, so I saw a good deal of Dickens and we became well acquainted.

It had been apparent for months, in 1884, that the Indians were in an ugly mood and that an uprising was a possibility. Concrete evidence of this was the trouble at Poundmaker's earlier in the summer over the arrest of Kahweechetwaymot for striking a government farming instructor, when a battle between the Indians and the Mounted Police was averted by the slimmest of margins. The halfbreeds, too, it was known were disaffected. The attitude of the Indians in the Frog Lake district throughout the fall and winter continued provocative and disturbing, but nothing serious enough to furnish ground on which to support criminal charges developed and the cold months passed uneventfully.

Then, on March 31st, Dickens was advised by courier from Battleford that the halfbreeds at Batoche, ninety miles farther east, had taken up arms and were in open rebellion against the government. A clash had occurred at Duck Lake five days before between a hundred Mounted Police and civilian volunteers under Major Crozier and four hundred halfbreeds and Indians under Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont, and had resulted in a victory for the rebels and forced retreat for Crozier's company after a loss of twenty-five in killed and wounded.

Dickens at once dispatched Constable Billy Anderson to Frog Lake, where the great body of the Indians and the Indian agency were located, with a note to Quinn in which he advised the agent to get the dozen whites in the little settlement together and bring them as quickly as possible to Fort Pitt, where they would have the protection of the police. However, if Quinn thought best he could bring the detachment from Pitt to Frog Lake.

There was already a detail of six constables and a corporal at Frog Lake, housed in a small one-room log building; the detachment if it came would have had to bivouac in the open and itself be exposed to attack, with several hundred Indians on the ground, many of them itch-

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ing for trouble. Dickens' second suggestion therefore was not considered and Quinn prepared to carry out the first. He asked me to accompany him to the Roman Catholic mission, where the Rev. L. A. Fafard was in charge.

It was eleven o'clock and the priest was in bed, but he came down and opened the door at our knock. Quinn told him the program, but he immediately entered a protest.

"Non, non!" he said. "I do not think we should leave Frog Lake. I think we should show we have de confidence in de Indian, now when trouble is come."

Quinn had fully determined to go with the other white residents to Pitt. He had berated me savagely a few moments earlier because I had told him I was staying, that I could not leave the store, of which I was in charge at the time, without orders from Pitt. "Don't be a fool, Cameron!" he snapped at me. "You're not obliged to wait for orders to save your life!"

This was clear evidence that he already feared an outbreak. But Quinn was a Roman Catholic and the priest's stand plainly unsettled him. We met a little later with all the other whites in the farming instructor's house. Here the priest again urged his "confidence" views and in the end it was decided all but the police detail should stay. I had hoped they would leave because I knew that there were Indians not any too well-disposed to some of the white men, the priest and Quinn among them. But since I was not going myself my mouth was closed. As to the police, it was agreed that if the Indians were to turn hostile they would first attack the police in order to secure their rifles and that would only be the start of the slaughter, and in any case they could be no protection to us.

This, as has been said, was the night of March 31st. So at daybreak next morning the police left. And the confidence of the priest proved tragically misplaced for before noon on the following day both he and poor Quinn were shot dead by the Indians. Indirectly, Father Fafard, while he honestly believed he gave the others sound advice, was responsible for the massacre, for if he had not persuaded them against it, all would have gone to Pitt and in all probability there would have been no butchery. I escaped through the strategy of a friendly Indian who took me to the Hudson's Bay store and away from the others marked for slaughter just before the shooting began, on pretense of wanting a cap.

ON THE morning of April 14th Inspector Dickens sent Corporal Cowan, Constable Loasby and Special Constable Henry Quinn (no relation to Tom Quinn, the Indian Agent at Frog Lake) out from Pitt to scout toward Frog Lake. Nothing had been heard regarding the movements of the Indians since the massacre and Dickens was anxious for news, anticipating as he did an attack on Fort Pitt. The scouts went out along the river, avoiding the trail, which ran one to six miles to the north. Meanwhile the Indians had left Frog Lake, come down the trail and were in camp on the upland level at the top of the slope at the foot of which, two hundred yards from the riverbank, lay Fort Pitt.

No doubt a century earlier Pitt had been really what its name implied, but in 1884 it was a fort in name only—in reality just a collection of stout log buildings facing inward to form a square, with open spaces separating them. There was nothing in the way of fortifications, no stockade or bastion, although following news of the Frog Lake murders the police had hurriedly thrown up barricades closing these openings and built a couple of lookouts at the corners. They had also built a scow in which they could embark in the event of having to abandon the place. As things turned out it was fortunate they had taken these precautions, otherwise it is possible a bigger massacre at Pitt might have followed that previously at Frog Lake.

The Indians had with them H. R. Halpin, who had been in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Cold Lake, forty miles to the north of Frog Lake, and who had been captured after the massacre. Someone who could write was needed to pen the demand for surrender they purposed to present to Captain Dickens and much to his disgust Halpin was nominated to fill the hateful role.

The day the Indians went down from Frog Lake to Pitt, Big Bear—at the suggestion of James K. Simpson, my superior

in the Hudson's Bay service (who had come in from Pitt the evening following the massacre) and myself—called a council to recommend to his followers that they permit the Mounted Police, if they would, to surrender the fort without a fight and go down the Saskatchewan to Battleford. But the result made us regret having interfered. One of the leading ruffians in a speech told the council he thought our idea was great. They could promise the *Shemoginisuk* they would not be attacked if they gave up the fort peaceably and then shoot them down in the open as they marched to the river. That would be much better than having to drive them out in a battle, because in that case no doubt a number of the Indians would be killed.

As may be imagined, as we left the council we were steeped in gloom. Why had we been mad enough to suggest it?

The demand for surrender when it came brought an instant rebuff from Dickens. To a second demand his reply was that he would hold the fort as long as he had a man able to point a gun. Repulsed in their efforts to secure the place without a fight, the Indians now resorted to strategy. They invited the chief trader to a parley in the open halfway between the fort and their camp. Against the advice of Captain Dickens, McLean agreed and taking with him his interpreter, Francois Dufresne, he left the fort.

Gradually and without exciting his suspicion, they drew the officer out of range of the police guns and finally told him the discussion would be concluded in their camp and he was to accompany them there. Though most unwilling, he had no alternative and had to agree. They were all seated, McLean urging them to give up the idea of taking Fort Pitt and return to Frog Lake, when the scouts sent out by Dickens the day before—not knowing the Indians were ahead of them—suddenly appeared behind them and putting spurs to their horses attempted to ride through the camp to the fort. The Indians immediately caught up their guns and rushed to cut them off. A furious exchange of gunfire followed. Cowan was killed, Loasby wounded. Quinn escaped temporarily but was captured next day.

Alarmed by the firing, McLean jumped to his feet and said he must return to the fort. Wandering Spirit, the war chief,

North-West Mounted trooper of the period.

enraged because the trader had kept from them the knowledge that the scouts were out and furious over being surprised, turned his rifle on the Hudson's Bay officer. But Little Poplar threw his arms about McLean and so in all probability saved his life. The war chief then placed a hand on McLean's shoulder. "You will not return to the fort," he declared fiercely. "You are a prisoner."

McLean was then ordered to write a letter to his wife, telling her the Indians were determined that the police should leave the fort at once, that if they refused they had brought kerosene with them and the buildings would be burned over the occupants' heads, and that she, their three daughters and small children, and all other white civilians were to come into the Indian camp. Though almost frantic, greatly fearing for their safety, the chief trader was forced to do as commanded and on receipt of the letter all who had sought protection in the fort walked out and joined the Hudson's Bay head officer, trusting in the good will of Big Bear toward Company personnel.

Since no reason now remained why they should attempt to hold Fort Pitt, the police made a hurried departure, carrying with them the scow fortunately just finished, the colors and the wounded scout Loasby. The scow was placed in the water and they embarked. Night was ap-

proaching, the Saskatchewan was in the spring breakup stage and huge blocks of ice raced with the swollen current. The scow leaked badly, danger of its being hit and sunk was a tremendous strain, but at length they reached the other bank, a mile or two below the fort. Guards were posted, for they felt sure they would be followed and attacked. But the Indians were too busy carrying off the large stock of Company goods to their camp to consider following the police.

To the credit of Big Bear let it be recorded that the old chief kept his promise to help if he could enable the police to quit Pitt and embark in safety. Aided by Little Poplar, he strode up and down before his villainous crew and prevented them charging down on the departing *Shemoginisuk* as they had planned to do.

The following notes, describing briefly some of the detachment's experiences in going down the river, are taken from Corporal Sleigh's diary:

> Apr. 15—Hudson's Bay employees with other civilians, 28 in all, gave themselves up to Big Bear. Impossible to hold fort now, so had to retire gracefully, carrying Loasby, across the river in scow and camp for the night. Nearly swamped in crossing; scow leaking badly. General idea prevailed we would be attacked going downriver. Thus ended the siege of Fort Pitt.
>
> 16—Up at 4:30 after a wretched night. Snowing fast and very windy. Several men frostbitten; clothing frozen on our backs.
>
> 17—Started 7 A.M. Ice running very strong. Some narrow escapes in ice jams. Camped for dinner. Resumed trip at noon.
>
> 18—Dull and cold. Much ice running.
>
> 19—Left Slapjack Island 7:13 A.M. Ran five hours. Camped Pine Island for night.
>
> 20—Here all day. Barricaded scow; inspected arms. Rough-looking parade. Wounded man better.
>
> 21—Left 7 A.M. At 11 hailed Joe Alexander and two policemen on south bank with despatches for us. Battleford safe; troops expected daily. Ran all day; stopped small island for night. All slept aboard scow; two men on picket.
>
> 22—Started 5:45; reached Battleford 9 A.M. Garrison turned out and presented arms. Police band played us into fort. Enthusiastic greeting. Ladies gave us a grand dinner.

Corporal R. B. Sleigh was a nephew or near relative of Lord Roberts, the famous British general, affectionately known as "Bobs." He was the non-com in command of the six-man Frog Lake detail which left that ill-fated spot the morning before the massacre on April 2nd. He was the first man killed in the battle of Cut Knife, west of Battleford, exactly a month later. He was a soldier and a gentleman and his death was deeply regretted by all who knew him.

THE police were able to take little or nothing from Pitt but the clothes on their backs and Captain Dickens in the confusion of departure and in his solicitude for the safety of his men forgot for the time being that his famous father's gold watch, bequeathed to him at his death, was left with other personal effects behind in his trunk.

A few days later a halfbreed, one Alfred Schmidt, showed me the watch in the camp at Frog Lake. "I give you for fifteen dollars," he said.

I examined it closely. On the inside of the case was traced the name *Charles Dickens* and a date. A small gold locket attached to the chain held a miniature of his wife and a lock of her hair.

I should have liked to secure the watch with a view to returning it to the captain should our ways ever cross again, but this seemed so very problematical as to make it scarcely worthwhile planning anything for the future. Besides, the Indians had appropriated everything I owned, including my money, and I had none. I was glad, however, to learn from the captain afterward that he had recovered his prize memento on the surrender of the hostiles, and the well-worn timepiece which served to mark the hours devoted to the fortunes of David Copperfield and the delightful excursions and mishaps of the ingenuous Mr. Pickwick is doubtless now in the possession of some other member of the family.

I was amused when the prisoners from Pitt came into the Indian camp at Frog Lake, to see little Kitty McLean, aged about 13, the youngest of the three pretty McLean girls, up to her knees in a pair of Dickens military top boots. I cannot recall now how she came by them or her reason for wearing them, but of one thing I am certain: they were not pinching her toes.

As senior officer, Dickens on arrival took over the Battleford command from Inspector Morris.

That sunstroke in India left its mark on the captain as long as he lived. In '85, after the rebellion had been stamped out, he was on his way over the trail from Battleford to the nearest railway point, 180 miles to the south, and spent the last night before reaching his objective, Swift Current, at Saskatchewan Landing, thirty miles north of that hamlet. The next morning was extremely hot and when he arrived about noon in Swift Current he had been so affected by the heat that he seemed in a sort of stupor and staggered after dismounting, like a drunken man. His batman, Larry O'Keefe, and I got him over to the hotel and to bed and all that afternoon we stood one on either side of him and held him down while he went from one convulsion into another. I was greatly alarmed and wired Mounted Police headquarters at Regina that the inspector was seriously ill and in desperate need of medical care. I received a reply to the effect that if he wasn't better in the morning Dr. Jukes would be up on the next train to look after him. However, in the morning the captain was up with the meadow larks, bathed, shaved and looking as spick and span as if he had never known a moment of illness in his entire life.

Inspector Dickens resigned from the police soon after the rebellion, and in Ottawa, where we both were living in the following year, I saw him almost daily and came to know him well. He told me he had an offer to lecture in the United States, but I doubt if he had any thought of taking it up. He was naturally retiring and I could not imagine him on a platform as a public speaker.

Many years after his death I had a letter from a younger brother, Sir Henry Fielding Dickens, Common Sergeant of the City of London. He had read a book I had written about the troubles of 1885 and wished to thank me for the kindly things I had said of his "favorite brother." He said that "Frank" had never got over the hardships he endured on the terrible trip down the Saskatchewan amid the snow and ice and that they had no doubt shortened his life.

I may end this story concerning the likeable son of a famous man with an item about him related to me by "Long John" Macdonald, one of the constables in the six-man detail that left Frog Lake at dawn on the day before the massacre and for many years before his retirement a commissioned officer in the Mounted Police. Said Macdonald:

"One day the captain was making the rounds when guard was being changed. As you know he was quite deaf, though not quite so deaf as some of the detachment imagined. One of the constables was a fellow named Edmonds, whose specialties were grousing and playing practical jokes, and he happened to be on sentry duty.

"Captain Dickens halted before him and asked for the password. Constable Edmonds stood at attention, regimentally stiff and straight.

" 'A life on the ocean wave, a home on the rolling deep,' he rattled off in a single breath.

"Dickens looked him over without batting an eyelash. Then he said: 'Very pleasant recitation. Now give me the password.' "

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CAUTIOUS SKIPPER

A deep-laden collier, her rudder jammed, was swinging wild to the tide rips and heading straight for the Saxon Prince's *starboard beam.*

THE only people who really appreciated Captain Pearly were the underwriters. He was safe. Other skippers might get into collisions, buckle hull plates on a rough docking job, or periodically run aground during a fog or a low tide. Captain Pearly was different. Captain Pearly took no chances. Knowing Pearly was on the bridge the underwriters slept soundly of nights and counted their insurance premiums as so much sure velvet in the bank. All of which Mr. Chalmers, executive vice-president of the Maizy Line, understood and appreciated as he surveyed the quiet, weather-beaten, stocky man who sat on the other side of the big desk and somewhat nervously shaped and re-shaped his soft

hat. Quite obviously he had to be handled with tact. Mr. Chalmers cleared his throat and beamed.

"Well, Pearly. What I called you in for . . . How'd you like to take our new ship the *Saxon Prince*? Maiden voyage. Open the new South American run." The captain stiffened until the words sank in.

"Why, it'd be an honor, sir." He frowned a little and added, "But I'm not the senior captain. Isn't it a little unusual?" The direct stare of his steady gray eyes disconcerted Mr. Chalmers somewhat so he coughed and waved a vague hand.

"Oh, we ignore seniority at times. Point is the *Saxon Prince* starts a new era for us and we need a reliable man. Someone the—er—shippers and other people feel they have faith in. There're the passengers to consider too. You have an excellent record for safety and that counts."

"Thank you, sir," said the captain. "I do my best."

"Of course, of course," Mr. Chalmers agreed heartily. "So we'll consider it settled. But I wanted to remind you we'll be competing with the Iron Stack Line on this new run so we'll have to tighten up our schedules and keep them so. Fast and reliable service, that's our slogan. You understand?"

"Why, of course, sir," agreed the captain, a trifle puzzled. "As I say, I do my best."

Mr. Chalmers riffled some papers on the desk and cleared his throat again. "Yes, naturally. But what I wanted to make clear is that this run is more important than the straight freighter run you've been sailing. The schedules will be *very* important. I know it's sometimes unavoidable to fall behind a little here and there, but time can be made up. Force the ship a bit, maybe squeeze out an extra hour or so when you can, as in loading and unloading, clearing ports and so on." Captain Pearly said nothing and Mr. Chalmers refrained from meeting his eyes. This was going to be awkward.

"For instance," he said brusquely, riffling the papers some more, "I see where you were two days bar-bound inside Augustus Harbor. That cost us time and time costs us money. Crew's wages, supplies and so forth."

Captain Pearly re-shaped his hat again and his frown deepened. "It was risky to try getting out that time in Augustus," he said simply. "The bar was bad."

Mr. Chalmers coughed. "I understand, but two other ships got out all right."

"Nip and tuck," the captain insisted. "If a swell had dropped them they'd have broken their backs."

"But they didn't," Mr. Chalmers pointed out. "Their skippers probably had good judgment—and—well, probably good luck. But it's little things like that that count. You stood by the *Alcinon* for twelve hours because she'd lost her rudder. Oh, I know the weather was bad but the Coast Guard cutter was coming up and you didn't have to wait until the last minute and see her arrive. So you were late getting into Port Blair and the agents had eased another ship to the pier ahead of you, so you spent an extra day in the stream waiting. I could go on with some other items but that's enough. You get the idea?"

Captain Pearly bit his lip and nodded. "Yes, I get the idea, sir," he said slowly. "But I don't like to take chances, even in leaving another ship in distress."

Mr. Chalmers looked up from the papers and seemed surprised. "Why, I meant nothing about taking chances. I just meant it's a good idea to watch that no time's wasted. Now this *Saxon Prince* run is important, as I've said, and the schedule must be kept. Of course," he spread his hands and shrugged, "we all know that acts of God like hurricanes and fog can't be helped, but apart from such things a lot of corners can be cut. And we'll have stiff competition with the Iron Stack boats." He drummed his fingers on the desk and looked at the captain and the captain said nothing.

"Between ourselves," said Mr. Chalmers softly, "I understand that Captain Watrous, commodore for the Iron Stack, even runs full speed in a fog when he's behind time and clear of the coast. *You* know," Mr. Chalmers winked, "the telegraph's at half-speed so it looks all right in the *log*, and private instructions to the engine room to keep her going. Watrous has a theory that a ship at full speed is under better steering control and is better able to clear any obstruction that's sighted, whereas at half speed a ship is pretty slow and logy."

Captain Pearly re-shaped his hat for a

last time and slowly got up. "That's a matter of opinion, sir," he said. "But I see what you mean. I can only say again that I'll do my best."

"Fine, fine," said Mr. Chalmers heartily and got up and shook hands. "Just show me what you can do with the *Saxon Prince* this first voyage and you'll have the berth permanently. Goodbye and good luck!"

"That," said Captain Pearly to himself as he left, "is something I'll certainly need." He did not feel very happy.

HE WAS still not feeling very happy when the *Saxon Prince* sailed. Her send-off had been impressive, he had to admit. Bands playing; colored streamers tossed around; officials on the dock to wave, and half the shipping in port blasting with the sirens to wish good luck for a maiden voyage. Captain Pearly was acutely aware once again he had made a big step up. It was an important occasion. The *Saxon Prince* was an important ship. Not like taking out a drab old tramp which no one ever noticed. He wouldn't want to go back. But he was apprehensive if he could handle this fine new berth, remembering Mr. Chalmers' over-plain suggestions. *Fast and reliable service. It's the schedule that matters.*

He felt himself sweating a little when they dropped the harbor pilot and steamed into the outer channel. He was on his own now and he hoped he'd have time to settle down before any real decisions had to be made. But as if he had read the captain's thought Mr. Ames, the tall, young executive officer crossed the bridge and towered genially beside him. "That string of lighters coming up on the starboard bow, sir. They're heading to cross us pretty soon. Shall I drop her to 'Slow' until they're clear?" He was so confident of the answer he already had his hand on the telegraph and was surprised when Captain Pearly hesitated. Of course, the lighters' tug was bucking the tide and she hadn't signaled for a right of way yet, but it was the usual courtesy to let a cumbersome tow go ahead, unless there was ample room. And there wasn't ample room in the outer channel. The executive repeated his question and added, "They probably won't hold us up more than half an hour."

Captain Pearly bit his lip. That was just it. Half an hour. He could almost feel Mr. Chalmers' lean fingers tapping on his shoulder blade. *It's the little things that count. Half an hour here, an hour there. Fast and reliable service is our motto. And it's the schedule that counts.* He heard himself saying hoarsely, "Signal them we're going ahead. We'll have plenty of clearance!"

Mr. Ames looked at him queerly and then reached for the siren lanyard. "Yes, sir. We're going ahead," and he was a puzzled man when they finally raced past the lighter's tug and her swearing skipper leaned from his wheelhouse and shook his fist and struggled to hold his cumbersome charges steady in the tide rips so they wouldn't swing wild across the channel. It wasn't such a close thing, but it could have been if the lighters had gone amuck, and Mr. Ames shook his head and wondered.

"It's damned queer," he confided to the third mate the other side of the bridge. "I've sailed with him before and he never took a chance like that. I'd have bet ten to one he'd play it safe. Maybe getting this jump to a crack new ship's gone to his noggin."

"Could be," agreed the third sagely. "But they told me he was an easy-going old codger and there'd be nothing to worry about."

"Well, we'll see," Mr. Ames muttered and stared at the captain's uncompromising back. He couldn't know Captain Pearly was feeling empty inside and was shaking a little. You couldn't suddenly reverse the habits of a lifetime and not feel the effects. It hadn't really been necessary to beat those lighters to the channel this early in the voyage. Half an hour was nothing much and could be made up. But he'd wanted to find out if he had the nerve Mr. Chalmers demanded. It had been an opportunity to find out, and he felt a little shocked that he had taken it.

He tried to be fair about it all. He understood the Line's attitude about schedules, especially with an advertised fast new run. He knew too why he had been picked for this new command. The Line had had quite a little trouble of late; one ship piling on Blunt's Reef; another running down a fishing boat; an-

other bucking a head gale for too long, straining her plates and foundering with the loss of three hands. Listed as accidents, of course. Such things could happen to any ship and any skipper, but they looked bad in the papers and certainly the underwriters didn't like it. So the Line had really needed a clean-record man to open the new run and Captain Pearly got his chance. He didn't want to make a mess of it. He knew if he did he'd go back to the tramps, or more likely be eased out of the Line altogether. And he was getting too old to make a start with some other outfit. Not many cared to hire another Line's discards. So for his own sake he had to satisfy Mr. Chalmers and at the same time maintain his record for caution and safety. It wasn't going to be easy.

He bit his lip and clenched his hands inside his pockets. They didn't know what was behind his habitual caution. Yes, it was probably excessive at times, he had to admit. But they'd all forgotten he'd served his time under Mad Harry Paine who was afraid of nothing and delighted in breaking records. He had too, time and again, even if it drove his officers gray and he was anathema to other skippers whose owners kept needling them to go and do likewise.

Captain Pearly still sweated when he remembered the narrow squeaks, the long chances Mad Harry took and got away with, riding a fantastic streak of luck for years. None of it had inspired the young Pearly to become a crack skipper too. Very much the reverse. Especially when he remembered how Mad Harry's luck had finally run out. He'd tried to ram into a channel mouth in thick weather when he should have waited, trusting to his luck and his judgment. Well, he had hit the channel all right. He had, in fact, hit the guardian lightship full on, cut her in two and sank her and his own ship as well. If he hadn't—just a few fathoms either way would have cleared him—he'd have broken another record. As it was he was a broken old man now, his license lifted, tottering around the docks and glad to get any odd job tossed him for charity's sake. Captain Pearly didn't want to end up like that. And he didn't want to go back to the tramps or be permanently set ashore. So somehow he had to see the thing through. He only hoped a little of Mad Harry's fabulous luck would stand by him, for a while at least, and in a measure he got his wish.

Aided by a strong following wind and a following sea, the *Saxon Prince* made her first landfall twelve hours ahead of schedule, so she was able to dock, transact her business, and get to sea again before a strike closed the port down for three days. Very obviously there wouldn't have been any schedule left to keep if the ship had been trapped by that unforeseen happening and Mr. Chalmers felt so good about it he sent his radioed congratulations, and gleefully rubbed his lean hands together.

"I guess the old boy's waking up all right," he told his secretary. "Took my little talk to heart. We'll take the wind out of the Iron Stack Line yet!"

Captain Pearly handed the message to Mr. Ames and said dryly, "That's all you've got to do to rate a pat on the back. Just get the breaks. Let's see what he says when we don't."

"Well," said his executive officer reasonably, "you can't blame him. If we'd been caught by the strike it'd have cost the Line plenty."

"That's so," agreed Captain Pearly, brushing a hand wearily over his eyes. "We mustn't forget the expenses." He went to his cabin and Mr. Ames stared after him.

"What the hell's eating him," he muttered. "He ought to be tickled pink."

HE REPEATED that remark several times in the next few weeks. The *Saxon Prince* made her second port just ahead of a hurricane that tied up all other shipping along the coast, or kept it hove-to for days. By the time she had finished her unloading and loading the storm had passed and she sailed out into perfect weather again, making a fast run to her next port and steaming across the notoriously bad bar on a full flood tide and without any delay at all. Coming out she ran into what looked like certain disaster. A deep-laden collier, coming in, jammed her rudder and was swinging wild to the tide rips and heading straight for the *Saxon Prince's* starboard beam. There was nothing to do. There was no sense in stopping. There was no sense in trying to maneuver against

another ship that had taken charge of herself and whose engine apparently couldn't hold her. Mr. Ames gripped the taffrail, white-faced, and muttered, "Oh, my God!"

Captain Pearly closed his eyes, said, "Keep her as she goes," and waited for the crash. When he opened his eyes again and remembered to breathe, the collier was careening astern of him, taken by a sudden side rip that had carried her clear. Mr. Ames had staggered to the chartroom settee for a cigarette to quiet his nerves.

It was that way all on the outward run. At Port Lobos the marker buoy at the channel mouth had broken adrift and the second mate, who was new to the run, was about to alter the course accordingly when Captain Pearly came on the bridge. Sheer accident. He was looking for a pipe he had left in the chartroom. Captain Pearly didn't need a marker buoy to give him his bearings. He took a long look at the coast line and checked the second mate's half-completed order. "Keep her as she goes," he said a little shakily. Fifteen minutes on the new course the second had in mind would have piled the *Saxon Prince* on mushroom coral hiding under a short two fathoms. Luck, if you ever saw it. Mr. Ames mentioned it very cheerfully at dinner in the saloon that night and then wished he hadn't.

Captain Pearly had looked at him and said in a brittle voice, "You don't run ships by luck, mister!"

Mr. Ames swallowed some unchewed salad and kept still. He confided to the second mate later, "I still can't figure what's eating him. He gets all the breaks in the book and he acts like it's been the other way round." He didn't understand. Captain Pearly was frightened.

Captain Pearly had prayed for some luck but not all this. He kept remembering what had happened to Mad Harry Paine. He had himself taken chances on this voyage he'd never have thought of taking when he'd had his comfortable old tramp. And the more the luck seemed to hold the more chances he felt like taking. It wasn't right. He knew it wasn't right. It had to crash sometime. But he wanted to hold this new berth so badly he felt himself slipping into the reckless current that had finally ruined Mad Harry. Captain Pearly was frightened at himself. You don't discard the beliefs and instincts of a lifetime in one voyage. Not without feeling queer inside. Captain Pearly felt queer. He had a superb new ship. Her engines pounded rhythmically their sixteen or more knots an hour, with never a breakdown. Her steering gear was perfect. She rode the heaviest seas dry-decked and with ease. She trimmed like an angel. There was no friction between the officers, all good men. Even the crew had not yet complained about the food. It was simply too perfect and it didn't seem like the sea.

Mr. Chalmers was not worried by such things. He rubbed his lean hands together and sent another radio of congratulations when the *Saxon Prince* started for home, a full two days ahead of her schedule. "That's showing the Iron Stack Line," he told his secretary. "Fast and reliable service. We're giving it. Pearly's making good. Shows I'm a good judge of men. A little needling was all it took."

"He's had a lot of luck this run," the secretary pointed out. "It won't be that way every time."

"Luck, of course," beamed Mr. Chalmers. "But he's also been using his head and not being too fussy. That's the spirit I like in my skippers." He coughed and reflected. "Anyway, allowing for luck, the fact he's two days ahead of schedule shows the time I laid down for the run can be maintained, even allowing for set-backs. We'll give Pearly an official dinner when he gets in."

THE *Saxon Prince* was three days from home when Mr. Ames knocked on Captain Pearly's door and went in after a sleepy, "Yes?" Captain Pearly was sitting up in his bunk and Mr. Ames took off his uniform cap and closed the door behind him. "It's getting pretty thick, sir," he said.

Captain Pearly grunted and climbed to the deck and started to dress. "How's the glass?"

"Steady, sir. And none of the radio reports indicate bad weather. But I think we'd better slow her to half."

"Why certainly," Captain Pearly started then checked himself. He could feel Mr. Chalmers fingers tapping at his shoulder blade. *They say Captain Watrous, commodore for the Iron Stack, runs full speed in a fog when he's behind time and clear*

of the coast! . . . Telegraph's set so the log reads right, but private instructions to the engine room . . . Well, the *Saxon Prince* wasn't behind time yet so that issue shouldn't bother him, but still . . . Mr. Ames caught up his thought.

"Radio reports say it's thick way up and past George Island. We'll lose a day anyhow, maybe more."

Captain Pearly bit his lip. "That will be unfortunate but we'll have to face it. Weather might clear by tomorrow."

Mr. Ames stared at the inside of his uniform cap and shifted uncomfortably. "Yes, I know, sir. But it doesn't look like it. I know what this first run means to the Line and—er—to you, sir. It'd be swell if we really could get in ahead of time anyway."

Captain Pearly fastened his belt and slowly pulled on his uniform jacket. "Chalmers?" he asked casually.

His executive officer shifted again uncomfortably and his face reddened. "He had a talk with me, sir. I want to say I didn't like it—I mean going behind a skipper's back—and I like it less after serving with you on this run. Nothing I could say though. I've got to look out for my own berth."

"Of course," said Captain Pearly, reaching for his oilskins. "But why bother to tell me all this? I suppose you were more or less instructed to see I pushed the ship, and if I failed you might step into the command."

Mr. Ames set his jaw and spoke through his clenched teeth. "I gathered that was the idea, sir, and I want to say I want no part of it. Chalmers is all for the Line which I suppose he should be, and this schedule means a lot to him, but he tries to push his skippers around too much. I just wanted you to know how we all stand and that whatever goes I'm with you."

Captain Pearly stared at him for a long moment while he pulled on his sou'wester, and then his eyes crinkled as he smiled. "That's damned decent of you, Ames. Best thing I've heard in years. I don't think we need to worry much, though. If we do lose a couple of days we'll still be in on time."

The executive officer nodded and licked his lips. "That part's O.K. sir, but according to the route laid off for us we're to go through the George Channel, between George Island and the mainland. Maybe you've never run it. I have. It cuts off eight hours' steaming time, but it's tricky even in clear weather. It'll be tough in a fog."

"Let's wait until the time comes," said Captain Pearly reasonably. "We'll work it out then."

"Yes, sir," said the executive. "And shall I drop her to Slow in the meantime or . . ."

Captain Pearly shook his head. "I'm getting pretty tired of this schedule business. Let's just be sailors for once. Ring her to Slow!" Mr. Ames started to go when the captain's voice checked him for a moment. "One thing," said Captain Pearly. "I'd like to say thanks, Mr. Ames!"

THE *Saxon Prince* had lost almost two days when, crawling through a thickening fog, her lookouts heard the mournful foghorn from the lighthouse on the south point of George Island. Captain Pearly stopped the ship while he considered. There was no wind, and as the foghorn sound came consistently from the one direction he knew his position exactly. There would be no trouble entering the channel, which at its mouth was wide enough to accommodate a fleet, but looking at the detailed chart Captain Pearly could see the inner channel ran this and that way like a snake and would take some very cautious navigation at the best.

"I think we can make it all right," said Mr. Ames, nervously tapping on the chart with his dividers. "Just take it slow and easy. They've got whistling buoys on most of the shoals and there's an automatic foghorn on Cape Forward where we turn north."

"Very nice," said Captain Pearly dryly. "But it still sounds better to go around outside George Island. Plenty of sea room there and we might even take a chance and put her Full Ahead." He laughed a little as his executive looked at him sharply and then looked around to see if any of the quartermasters had heard. "No, I was just talking. The only point now is, do we run the channel or just toss the schedule over the rail."

"That," said Mr. Ames carefully, "is up to you, sir."

Captain Pearly stared at the bulkhead and while he could still feel Mr. Chalmers'

fingers tapping at his shoulder blade he could also see what was left of Mad Harry Paine tottering around the wharves and looking for odd jobs. He could also see his passengers placidly at lunch down in the main saloon, and he had a picture of a brand-new crack ship ramming into iron rocks. And a further picture of himself relegated back to the tramp vessels, if not put ashore for good. Maybe Mad Harry had the right idea. You couldn't win anyway, trapped between the owners wanting profits and the underwriters wanting safety. You took a chance and won and you were a fabulously crack skipper. And if you lost . . . well, maybe the old-timers were right. You should never come back to tell about it. Go down with the ship. Captain Pearly brushed a tired hand over his face and bit his lip. He didn't know. He just didn't know. But all his instinct and his sailor training called for just one verdict. Mr. Ames was no help. Mr. Ames stared rigidly at the chart and waited. There was only one man who could make a decision in a case like this. It wasn't Mr. Ames' ticket that was at stake, or even his berth.

Captain Pearly faced at the very best a slide back to the tramps he hated so, and at the worst a grim-faced Board of Inquiry . . .

If Captain Pearly was sweating it out in his chartroom on the *Saxon Prince,* Mr. Chalmers was doing even better in his office at the home port. He was pacing up and down and waving his arms and trying to talk to his port captain and his secretary at the same time.

"It won't be my fault anyway," he announced heatedly. "Pearly ought to know what to do. Fog clear up and over George Island and the George channel. He's a safe man. That's why I picked him. He'll take no chances. He'll go around."

"Maybe not if he remembers your advice," said the port captain acidly. "He's nipping the schedule close now and you as good as told him if he muffed it this time he was through."

"I didn't tell him to take any raw chances!" shouted Mr. Chalmers. "I just suggested he might forget some of his fuddy-duddy stuff."

"From what you told me and from what I gather, you put it pretty strong," said the port captain. "He's liable to go all out now just to show you he can deliver the goods."

"But if the damned fool tries to run the channel now . . . Oh, hell! Have you got him on the radio yet?" The secretary shook her head. "Just snatches, sir. Nothing that makes sense."

"Reception around George Island always has been bad," said the port captain. "Sometimes even complete blackouts. Anyway, it's probably too late to warn him."

"He shouldn't need any warning," blared Mr. Chalmers frantically. He could see his own job fading away and some very bad sessions with caustic underwriters. "You don't take a ship through a bad channel in thick weather."

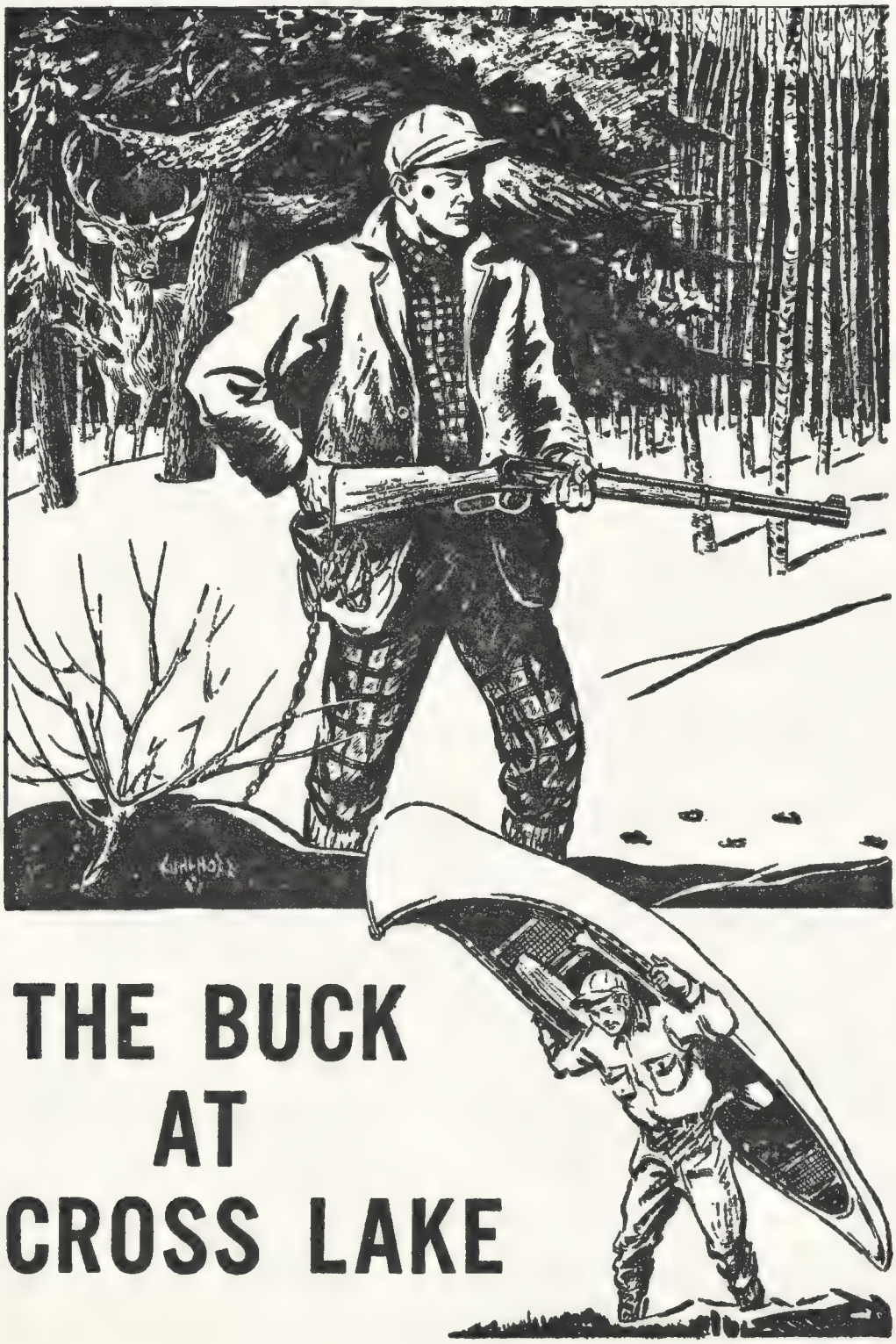
The port captain shrugged and was unsympathetic. "You wanted a cautious man for the job so the new run would start off O.K. And you wanted a man who'd also make time. So you steamed up Pearly. Now you're praying to God he'll act natural and take care. It's in your lap, mister." He added grimly, "If there's any lives lost you're a gone gosling!"

"All right!" shouted Mr. Chalmers. "So I take the blame. But I'm betting Pearly does the sensible thing. Tell them to keep trying the radio."

Captain Pearly only received one garbled message which even his puzzled radio operator could not fathom. It read: *Don't . . . George Channel . . . unexpected . . . adrift and dangerous . . . Schedule will be satisfactory . . . Reply . . . reply . . .*

"Reply to what," asked a puzzled Captain Pearly and Mr. Ames could not help him. Much the same garbled message kept coming through but nothing made much sense. Captain Pearly considered Mr. Chalmers was urging him to take the short cut and maintain the boasted schedule. Mr. Ames thought something was wrong. The radio operator simply said that all he could get was static when he tried to ask what the hell were they trying to talk about. It didn't make much difference. Captain Pearly remembered what had happened to Mad Harry Paine, and also remembered he was a sailor. He threw his command away and all of his future. He brought the *Saxon Prince* home.

(Continued on page 145)



THE BUCK AT CROSS LAKE

ILLUSTRATED BY PETER KUHLHOFF

I WAS always glad to see the hunters go home. After they went I could have another chance at that big buck on Cross Lake. Maybe that's a poor reason why I, Joe Manners, registered guide, was happy to be rid of the people who furnish most of my living. But you have to know how things were between myself and the Cross Lake buck. Maybe, no matter how I tried to explain it, you just couldn't know.

I was born twenty-two years ago on a homestead eighteen miles from Cross Lake. My father is a farmer, which in this country means that he has a few cows and a few cleared acres where he plants one thing and another. But nobody who wanted to be just a farmer would even live here. My father's real interest lies in trapping, hunting, and fishing. If he wasn't good at all of these we wouldn't have had even a bare living.

My father taught me what he knew about the woods, and as I grew up I found out more on my own. I found out also that anyone who grows up the way I did is spoiled for anything else. When I was

By JIM KJELGAARD

eighteen I went to work in the paper mill down at Binsanaba. But, though some people seemed happy working there, I was not. They gave me a little two-wheeled hand truck, and my job was to move things around the mill.

It wasn't especially hard work. But all the while I was pushing that little truck around I kept thinking of things, and seeing things, and hearing things that were a long way from Binsanaba. I'd be pushing the truck, and all of a sudden I'd think of a bear in a mud wallow. Or I would see a lake in early morning when the sun first hits it and little streamers of mist are rising. Or I'd be halfway across the stockroom floor and I'd hear a flock of gabbling geese. Six months at Binsanaba was all I could stand, and I went home with my pay in my pocket. My father was out beside the barn oiling the pan on a mink trap that wasn't working right.

"Hi, Joe," he said.

"Hi," I answered.

My father didn't look at me, and I figured he must be thinking what a fool I was to quit a good job—that and a regular paycheck is supposed to be what everybody wants. But what my father said next was, "I've been expecting you these past two weeks."

"Why?" I asked him.

"It gets hot in paper mills," he said.

"That's right," I agreed.

"You're back," my father said, "and I reckon you'll stay. But you know how to carry your own duffel."

That's all my father said to me and I knew what he meant. Once when Alan MacDonald, our nearest neighbor, came over, he and my father started drinking rum. My father gets talkative when he does that, and he looked out across the rolling forest that you can see from the front window of our house. There's so much of it that the end is only wavering blue haze, and beyond the haze there is still more forest. No man has ever roiled some of the streams and lakes, or left his footprints on some of the ridges that are hidden back in there. My father looked for a very long time. Then he turned to Alan MacDonald and said, "She's a stretch of country. But I can carry my own duffel through her."

What he'd really said was that he liked it here, and could get along without asking anybody to help him. What he'd told me was that he understood why I'd come back, but he expected me to get along. That was all right with me, and I knew that I could do all right. After a couple of seconds I took out my wallet and handed my father a five dollar bill. He tucked it into his pocket and went on working the trap. I got my old packsack, stuffed it full of the grub that I had bought from my father, and made up an outfit. I packed it into my little twelve-foot canoe and headed down the Mad River.

One time, when I was eight years old, I was walking up Shindley Ridge when a two-hundred-foot pine broke halfway up. The top bent over, pinning me between it and the trunk. It stopped just short of smashing me to a pulp, but to my dying day I'll remember how it felt when my father finally found me and pried that weight from my body. It was like coming from a deep, dark hole into bright sunshine when the pressure was relieved, and going down the river was a lot like that. It seemed that every second I'd spent in the mill at Binsanaba had been under pressure. Now the canoe, the pack, and the grub, were all mine. All I had to do was go.

I had been out almost an hour before I decided to head for Cross Lake. There's salmon trout in there, big fellows that weigh up to twenty pounds, and when evening comes they chase the flies into the shallows. The water fairly boils when they rise to the surface. You can have real fun in the Cross Lake shallows when the salmon trout are rising.

I left the river, paddled up Allan Creek, portaged over the ridge to Deer Lake, went down that, and portaged into Cross. I took my time, and the long northern evening was well under way when I finally stood on the ridge and looked down at the lake. Out in the center she was calm as any two-foot pool in any creek. But the water in the shallow bays was rippling and churning as those big trout came in to feed. After a few minutes of just looking and watching I started down the ridge.

But I stopped in my tracks.

THAT RIDGE over Cross Lake is forested with small poplars. But there are a few clearings, and where the sun strikes directly into these the worst tangles of brush I

ever saw have sprung up. They're a mixture of blackberry and raspberry brambles, and anything else that can find a rooting grows between the brambles. You can see right over most of these thickets, and I came out of the cool poplars to look over one and get my first look at the Cross Lake buck.

He stood just on the other side of the thicket, with his body framed between two poplars growing four feet apart and his head high. I think that everyone must have had moments which stand out brilliantly in the mind's eye. For those who fish, such moments might consist of the time they got an especially large fish, or one that put up a savage battle. A golfer might have made a wonderful shot, or a horseman has possibly had an especially exhilarating ride. Yet, at the time they occur, such moments are not fully appreciated nor do they carry any special thrill. It's afterwards, when you've had time to think about them, that the real ecstasy comes.

My first view of the Cross Lake buck was like that. I knew at first glance that, though he was young, he was an unusually fine deer. His antlers, with two prongs, or a Y, on each, were silhouetted against the silver water at the far side of the lake, and I knew also that I had never seen more perfectly symmetrical antlers or larger ones on a Y buck. We stared at each other for a second or two. Then the buck melted back into the poplars and was gone.

I continued down to the lake, cast my fly, and within a couple of minutes was fast to a six-pound salmon trout. He put up a savage fight, all those Cross Lake trout do when you take them on light tackle. But somehow I was neither enjoying it nor savoring it to its full extent. It was fun, but not the fun I'd expected. Something else had come in to steal part of the pleasure. But at that time I couldn't be sure it was the buck I had seen.

I thought about him. That night, while I ate salmon trout which was cooked over an open fire, his image as he stood in the poplars kept recurring and I could not put it out of my mind. It was irritating. A buck is a buck and there are lots of them in this country. I shot my first one when I was eight years old and there have been plenty since. Big ones, small ones, all kinds. There was no special reason for getting excited about this one.

But I still could think of nothing else and I could not understand why. The buck's antlers, though huge for a young deer, could be beaten by any of a dozen other bucks right around Cross Lake. Probably he was bigger in body, and somehow he had achieved more size without being guilty of clumsiness, than most deer. But I've still seen enough deer so that just one should not command too much attention. I spread my blankets, determined to go to sleep and forget him.

But I could neither sleep nor forget. Out on the lake a loon cut loose with his crazy wolf howl, and as though in answer to that a swimming beaver slapped the water with his tail. I lay awake staring at the Big Dipper, which seemed just over my head and so low that I could almost reach up and drink from it. But the picture that stood out clearest was that of the Y buck framed in the poplars. It was a biting thing, like a little deer fly that crawls into a fold of your clothing. Slap and twist as you might you cannot be rid of it. It must have been almost morning when I finally dropped off to sleep, and the sun was high when I woke up.

I went down to the lake, took off my clothes, and splashed around in shallow water until I had scared a school of minnows under rocks. I stunned half a dozen by tapping the rocks under which they sought shelter with another rock, rigged up a June Bug spinner, and went trolling for more trout. I got a couple of nice ones, packed them, and hit back over the portage.

But the memory of that Y buck went with me, and stayed with me all summer. I was just fooling around, living on the wages I had saved. I did give my father a hand with the farm work, though I never was one to like farming. Mostly I went out on the lakes and streams, portaging in to different places and camping overnight. But it was exactly like the mill at Binsanaba. No matter what I was doing I'd stop from time to time and just stare. The memory of that Y buck framed in the aspens would creep in and that's all I could see. I made three trips back to Cross Lake just to look at him and make sure he was real. He was real enough. I saw him twice more, far off and running. But even his run had something special about it, something that marked him as a

buck apart. And his track was distinctive both because it was bigger than others and because the left front hoof was just a little bit out of line. I found out a lot about his habits and favorite places on those trips to the lake.

The summer wore on and my money dwindled. Even the grubstake I had saved for outfitting a winter's trapline melted away, and the autumn found me with very little cash. It wasn't particularly worrisome because I never was much of a hand to worry. And I knew that, one way or another, I could carry my own duffel. A break would come.

It came in three deer hunters who dropped by the farm and wanted to know where they could get a guide. I took them out, right on the ridge back of the barn, though they seemed to think it was deep wilderness. All three had their deer by the end of the second day and they were so happy about it that, besides the seven-dollar-a-day guiding fee, they gave me a twenty-five-dollar bonus. They told other hunters about it, too, and a couple of days later there were five at the house. I took them out too. It really isn't much of a trick to show a hunter deer in this country. I continued to guide hunters until the first snow fell. Nobody comes in here after that. The first snow is usually only two or three inches. But it might be followed any day by two or three feet, and hunters aren't especially anxious to be marooned thirty-five miles from the nearest paved road.

I had a nice enough grubstake by this time and no need to bother my head about money. But that Cross Lake buck still stood in my memory, and I decided to settle things once and for all. As soon as his antlers were hanging over the fireplace I could rest easy and forget him. When my father hit out on his traplines I made up a pack and struck over the ridges to Cross Lake.

I found the buck's track all right, and where he had been pawing the snow aside to get the browse underneath. This was going to be easy—and what a mistake I made! I followed the Cross Lake buck every daylight minute of the remaining week of the season, and I used every trick I knew. But, no matter what I tried, the buck tried something better. One hour of the last day of the season remained when I stood on the ridge above Cross Lake, looking at that big, crooked-foot track winding into a spruce swamp. And I was whipped. There was a little motion up the ridge, and a fine eight point walked into view. I got him the first shot.

But he wasn't the one I had to get.

YOU CAN call a man a fool, and be entirely right, when a buck deer is and remains uppermost in his mind. But when I left Cross Lake and ploughed home through two feet of snow I still could not forget the buck I was leaving behind and what he had done to me. I was ashamed of that, I'm supposed to be able to get any buck I want in a whole lot less than a week's hunting. I told myself that something had slipped, and that not getting the buck was just one of those little tough breaks that anyone can run in to from time to time. That deer couldn't continue being smarter than I was, and I hadn't reached my father's house when I began to lay plans for getting him next year. He would not pull the same tricks on me again, because a week's hunting had taught me all his ruses.

I took the grubstake I'd earned guiding hunters and went back into the Gransley Creeks to trap. There was a little cabin there, and plenty of wood all around. The creeks were good trapping, too. I made a nice catch of mink, otter, and muskrats before the water froze, then started snow sets for fox, wolf, and lynx. I didn't do badly—I wouldn't have made any more money in the mill at Binsanaba no matter what job they gave me. But I wasn't at all satisfied and it was not loneliness which accounted for that. I can stand being alone. Something else was wrong.

Just before Christmas I tried to tell myself that all I needed was a hike, and to go somewhere besides the creeks for a change of scenery. But all the while I knew that was a lie, and when I strapped my snowshoes on it was with the definite intention of going to Cross Lake to see how the buck was making out. I struck over the ridges, and camped that night beside the Mad River. For the first time since deer season closed I knew a little peace and rest, and again I swore at myself because things were that way. I can't remember how many deer I've seen, and

haven't any accurate count of the number I've shot. That just one should get under my hide this way, and make a fool of me, was more than a little irritating.

But I still got up long before the late winter sun climbed slowly over the horizon, and started the rest of the trip. Before, in places, it had been hard going. Now the snow seemed to have no depth or weight. The big buck that had haunted me since my first sight of him was just a couple of ridges away. Far back in the forest a wolf howled, and I thought about him. Wolves kill a lot of deer in this country and maybe they had got the Cross Lake buck. For just a few minutes I found myself hoping they had. If I went in there and didn't find him I might know a little peace. If wolves had killed him it would prove that something could. Then I got to thinking that, if any wolf had killed him, I'd hunt it down and take its pelt if I had to spend the winter doing it. That buck was mine.

I broke over the little poplar ridge and looked down onto Cross Lake's frozen surface. For a minute I just stared, hoping I'd find the buck but fearing I wouldn't. Then, stopping to study every deer track I crossed, I started down through the poplars. There were plenty of deer there and the wolves had been working them. I found four kills. But I got clear to the lake without finding a trace of that big crooked-foot track and was beginning to sweat a little. I swung west on the ice, and had traveled maybe half a mile when I saw the buck I had come to see.

A warm spring bubbled up from the bottom at that point, and for twelve or fifteen feet out from shore the water lay black and unfrozen. The buck—he raised his head when he saw me—was drinking from it. For a moment all I could do was stare. He had shed his antlers. But he seemed bigger, and more regal, and more entrancing, than any deer I had ever seen before. Slowly I raised my rifle, and dropped it back again. This buck could not be taken in such a fashion. When I finally packed him across the ridges to my father's house he had to be wearing his antlers.

Twice more that winter I snowshoed the thirty-six miles each way just to see him, and both times I found him yarding with about ten or twelve other deer close to the open place in Cross Lake. He came through the winter all right; no wolf was big or fast enough to slash his belly.

Then, in the spring, I determined once and for all to forget him. A man just can't think about a buck deer and only about a buck. I packed my furs in, sent them to the auction, and started the warm weather business. Some of the deer hunters came back to fish, and I did all right with them. It was a busy summer, and the last fisherman I had to take out was a Mr. Williams, from Chicago. Having heard about our salmon trout he was interested in nothing else. I'd purposely avoided Cross Lake all summer. But I took Williams back there.

I landed him on Fishing Rock and studied the water. A grasshopper spread its wings, sailed off the rock, and lit in the lake. Almost at once the water dimpled as one of those big trout came up to gobble him in.

"Wait here," I told Williams. "Cast with flies until I come back with grasshoppers."

I started up the lake shore to a little meadow, and knelt to clap my hands over a grasshopper that stirred in front of me. But I never caught him. My eyes went up and over that meadow to the mighty deer that stood on the other side. I knew it was the Cross Lake buck; there are no more as big. Only this time, instead of a Y, he had eight perfect points and a huge rack. Ragged shreds of velvet still clung to them. But those antlers, I knew, would be a world's record if only they might be taken. The buck wheeled and jumped into the trees. Williams, a good sport, was laughing when I got back.

"Heck of a guide you are!" he jeered. "I caught my own grass—say, you're pale. Is something wrong?"

"No." I tried to smile.

But there was something wrong. All the while Williams fished I kept looking around, as though that big buck just had to step into sight again. Now it seemed that he was something I had to see, and the longing to know him again was much stronger than it had ever been before. I was glad when Williams gave it up and said he wanted to go home. Nor did I accept the group of fishermen who were waiting when we arrived. That buck was a fever in my veins, and as soon as Wil-

liams drove away I went back to the lake. For three days I haunted the little meadows and browsing patches, and I saw the buck three times more. Outwardly, except for the size of both body and antlers, there was still nothing that distinguished him from other bucks. But there seemed to be something within him, something like an invisible, unbreakable cord that attached itself to me and would not let go. I had to get him, and made plans for hunting around Cross Lake throughout the season.

But in this country a man carries his own duffel, and when deer season rolled around my money was again about gone. I had no choice about guiding the hunters who came. But the last week of the season I packed back into Cross Lake. For seven days I stalked that buck. I still-hunted him, tracked him, and tried to ambush him at his favorite feeding places. And in seven days I had just one glimpse of the deer I sought.

All winter long I thought about the buck, and five times made the long trip in just to see him. He was there, pawing the snow in his chosen yard and browsing on the branches of the white cedars.

All the next summer, at every opportunity, I fished Cross Lake. Five times I was so close to that big buck that I might have killed him with a .22—any deer hunter will tell you that you can get near them when the season isn't open. I might have killed him anyway. But his antlers, in the third summer I knew him, were still clothed in velvet. I didn't want that. I wanted the magnificent prize this buck would be when his antlers were polished and clean. More than that I wanted to take him fairly and in season. That year I refused to book hunters for the last ten days of the deer hunting. But, though I used all the hunting lore I knew, that buck still eluded me.

I went back to my trapping cabin, grimly determined that next season things would be different. For the first time in six years it would be legal to hunt deer with hounds.

ASIDE FROM the routine business of earning a living, there was little I did or planned that year which was not directly related to the taking of that Cross Lake buck. I knew that I couldn't stand another season of just thinking about him, of wondering what he was doing or was about to do. Besides things just had to play out in one way or another. That buck had wintered four times in the Cross Lake country. He might not be able to do it again. His antlers—it sometimes happens with deer—might become small and scrawny. Three times that summer I walked back in just to make sure he was still there. I wrote to the hunters who wrote me, booking the first three weeks of the season. But I saved the last week for myself.

The last hunter had gone, and a dusting of snow powdered the ground, when I left my father's house at two o'clock in the morning and struck up the road to Anbury. Now, and at last, I was well on the way to killing the buck at Cross Lake. He could not escape me again. I left the road and took the winding path that leads to George Arkens' house. The surly barking of his huge black and white deer hound greeted me.

Maybe you've seen deer hounds and watched them work? Well, you never saw one like that black and white devil of George Arkens'. He weighs about eighty pounds, and his powerful, bull chest is built for endurance. Long legs, not too slim, give him speed. His nose is second to none. He's far and away the best deer hound this country ever saw; when he gets on a track the hunter shoots the deer he's tracking. The hound growled when I went around the house to unsnap the chain that bound him to his kennel. But he made no offer to bite. An hour later I had him in the canoe and together we were going down the Mad River.

Two hours before sundown we broke over the poplar ridge that borders Cross Lake. But, though the hound was fretting to hunt, this time I was in no hurry. I made an unhurried camp, fed the dog, and crawled into my bedroll.

The first wan streaks of dawn were in the sky when I rolled out and prepared a leisurely breakfast. All of this had to be exactly right, and to have it otherwise would be only to ruin all. Night is the time for soft and creeping things, for shuffling paws in the dark and faint squeaks. But daylight is the time for glory, for seeing your dreams come true and knowing that they will come true. Full

daylight had stolen over the ridge before I grasped the hound's chain and started down through the thickets. And we found the tracks of the big buck.

While I slept he had dared come close to my camp. He had had the daring spirit to leave his hoofprints in the new snow scarcely two hundred yards down the ridge. There they were, huge and unmistakable, and smoking hot. The big buck must have passed this way scarcely a quarter of an hour before I left my bedroll. The hound, wild to be away, snuffled at the tracks and strained forward. But I still wished to feel every second of this, my most magnificent hunt, and I let two or three minutes pass before I unleashed the hound. He sprang away as though he had been unleashed from a catapult, and his thunderous bay rolled back to me.

This was good, this was exactly what I wanted. For three years I had come to that big buck. Now, at last, he was coming to me.

A lone white gull circled above the still unfrozen water, and his plaintive cries came clearly as he seemed to ask where his fellows had gone. Little ripples came in to renew their patient, endless job of washing the rocks along the bank, and a chickaree sat motionless on the end of a log. I saw all and heard all. But mostly I was listening to the baying hound.

He was traveling very fast; I could tell that by the speed with which he gained the top of the ridge. And he was on an exciting trail because excitement was reflected in his voice. It all seemed part of a very old and well-tested pattern. The hound would run that big buck until the buck could run no more. Then, to escape the thing that he could not shake from his trail, he would come down to swim the lake. There I would kill him.

The hound's baying faded and became muffled as he went down the other side of the ridge. But it was still part of a familiar pattern. This was no ordinary buck, no little yearling that dashed for water at the first hint of a pursuer behind him. Beyond any doubt wolves had coursed this buck many times, and he had developed ruses of his own to get rid of them. He would try all his tricks on the hound. But he would find that no wolf was coursing him now. The hound knew how to trail.

There could be no doubt as to the final outcome of this hunt, and after the many disappointments of the past three years that was a wonderful thing. Yet, even while I knew with all my heart that I wanted to kill this deer, and let his blood scald the snow, I could not suppress a great admiration for him. He was running like no ordinary deer, which will circle two or three times to test the mettle of his pursuer and head for water. Time and again he baffled the hound, and he was making a very long run. For almost three hours the chase led back and forth across the ridge. Then the buck struck out into the brush. The baying of the hound grew more faint, and finally was lost in the distance. I stood still, waiting.

In another half hour I saw the buck.

He broke over the ridge, six hundred feet above me, and though his sides were lathered and his tongue lolled from open mouth he was still running powerfully. I gasped and looked away when I saw the antlers he carried. But when I looked back again they were still there, as big as ever. Casually I raised my rifle. It was going to be an easy shot. I could not possibly miss. The course the buck was taking would bring him to the water less than thirty feet from me. Then, in the distance, I heard the baying hound.

The baying hound—I watched the buck come on, and thought of the three years I had hunted so hard to kill him. Through my mind flashed the memory of the many times I had come just to see if he was still here, and the sights of my rifle centered on his heart. All I had to do was squeeze the trigger and he would be mine. But I did not squeeze it, because the hound was coming. It was curious that it had not occurred to me before that he was really the hound's game, and that I could not take him that way.

The buck came down to the lake, trembled for one second where the water lapped the shore, then entered it and struck strongly towards the other side. I watched him go, and he was out of rifle range before I thought again how easily I might have killed him. Still, I'll always know that I *could* have killed him, and I thought while I stood there that I would come back next year.

I thought also that I would have some peace now.

RUGGED JOURNEY

By FRANKLIN GREGORY

The Mongol's hand slid deftly into the folds of his robe, and a knife blade gleamed.

WE WERE discussing the nature of proof and the fallibility of witnesses. Not a very exciting subject, you might say; but still, all in all, pretty important to newspapermen who earn their living checking facts. Max Sax

A "Blue Pencil Club" Story

ILLUSTRATED BY JOSEPH A. FARREN

pointed out that where you have but one witness to an event, you have to take his word for what happened even though you recognize he may be as humanly fallible as anyone else.

That was when Larry Gahagan spoke.

"Even if your one witness can't offer a shred of proof?" Larry asked.

We all turned. Larry had been sitting somewhat aside, nursing his rye and soda with that moody apathy that had characterized him in his recent visits to the Blue

Pencil Club. In fact, we hadn't realized that he was particularly listening.

"Yes," Max replied, "even if he hasn't a shred of proof."

Larry frowned into his glass. He was a good-looking chap with a lot of curly, blond hair; tall, large-boned, and with a simply amazing capacity for alcohol which, in the past few months, he was more and more prone to test.

"Sometimes," he suggested, "proof doesn't have to be substantial, does it, or even durable? Mightn't it be evanescent? I mean, damn it, take a piece of evidence of a perishable sort—here one day, gone the next. But the fact of its disappearance doesn't subtract from its abiding authority. Or does it?"

We didn't get what he was driving at, and Lee Bailey said so.

"I'm thinking of this," Larry said. And he showed us an old clipping from the *Herald,* headed, "Alien Suspect Escapes U.S. Immigration Agents." It meant nothing to us, and we didn't bother to read it.

"But more than that," Larry went on, "I'm thinking of that hangover I had when I got back from Samarkand."

We sat up at that. Not because of mention of the hangover (which was remarkable enough—it had lasted a long time, and Larry just wasn't the sort who got them) but because it was Larry's first reference to that strange journey of his since his return months before.

Of course you remember the headlines: "Reds Hold American Reporter as Spy in Uzbek S.S.R." "Russia Claims Scribe Dropped by Parachute Near Big Dam." And all the fuss that followed when our State Department turned on the steam to find out what it was all about.

You'd have thought for a while that our Larry Gahagan of the *Herald* would become a *casus belli* on the order of Helen of Troy or Archduke Francis Ferdinand. And then, when he was suddenly released, a locomotive couldn't pull a word of explanation out of the diplomats. And there was Larry's boss, Ace Carter, going around in circles with a dazed expression on his puss. For Carter had sent Larry out on the Jadwin story right here in Philadelphia only a week before the OGPU announced they had Larry in the cooler ten thousand miles away.

"At least I thought I had," Carter kept muttering at the time. "Look. I've got it down in the assignment book. Right there, see? When he didn't come back I thought he was on a binge."

Carter knew, of course, that Larry was what you might call a traveling lush. A few drinks, and he'd get an itch to go places.

"But, thunder! He'd never get very far—Harrisburg, maybe, or New York. Then he'd wire for dough. But Central Asia! My Lord! If he flew, where'd he get the money? And how'd he get into the country without a passport?"

IT WAS certainly a poser. And it kept right on being a poser. For when Larry finally returned, thanks to the kindly intervention of our Ambassador to Moscow, not a word would he say—to Carter, to us, to anybody. Until this night, months later, when we happened to be talking about proof and witnesses.

We waited, silently hoping, afraid that anything we might say would spoil Larry's suddenly apparent desire to talk. Then Larry said to Max, "You see, it's proof that's been bothering me. Corroboration. Another witness—but the only witnesses besides myself are this Mongolian, wherever he is now, and Jadwin. And Jadwin's dead."

There was a chorus of exclamations.

"Dead?"

"Charles Jadwin?"

"How do you know?"

For we knew very well that the police of the entire world were still searching for the man who, more than anyone else of his time, had revolutionized transportation. Jadwin—who had introduced the first streamliner; whose railroads had eliminated the changing of trains at Chicago on the trip between the coasts; whose travel agencies had established time-payment vacations; whose airplane companies had designed engines capable of supersonic speeds.

A strange, retiring man, Jadwin, notorious for his sudden raids on Wall Street financiers.

"Do you remember when he disappeared?" Larry asked.

"Very well," I said promptly, for I'd worked on the story. "Wednesday, May seventh." As a matter of fact, [illegible]

papers in town had been trying to get in touch with Jadwin that day, and we'd hung around his main offices in the Transport Building waiting for him, the other reporters and I. There'd been a queer report that he'd bought out Wilton Weavers, Inc., the big rug manufacturers up in Frankford. Perfectly silly thing to do, of course, for a transportation magnate, yet you always have to check such things.

Anyway, he never showed up at his office. And he didn't turn up at his Radnor mansion that night. As it turned out, he actually had bought the rug factory (nobody ever did learn why) and it was there that he was last seen—by a girl secretary who had returned from lunch to find Jadwin talking with a young man in a temporary office he'd set up.

The door between her outer office and his office was slightly ajar, but she didn't get a very good look at the visitor. He was tall, she thought, and blond. And as she set about her work, she was aware of the murmur of their conversation. She didn't hear what they were talking about, and she didn't know how long the talk lasted. But after it had stopped for some time, she glanced into the inner office and there wasn't anyone there. Only two hats on a rack.

She was a little surprised, for there wasn't any other door leading out of Jadwin's room. But she reasoned that the two, Jadwin and the young man, had gone out behind her back while she was busy typing.

Nobody else in the plant saw Jadwin. In fact, it was closed down at the moment (Jadwin was setting up a new production schedule).

Yes, I remembered Jadwin's disappearance very well. And so did Max Sax and Lee Bailey. "May seventh," I repeated.

"The day I left," Larry said.

"But—" I protested. "You said he was dead?" It was very confusing.

"I was his visitor," Larry said. "It wasn't Jadwin's fault. It was really mine. You see, I wanted to see this girl—Nastasia Ivanovna, that was her name. Otherwise we might have gone somewhere else and Jadwin would probably still be alive."

Max Sax set his beer glass down hard.

"You mean you and Jadwin left together?"

"It was like this—" Larry said.

OF COURSE, the *Herald* was on top of the story, too, and had sent Larry out to learn if Jadwin really had bought the rug factory and if so, why. But while the rest of us reporters were cooling our heels at the Transport Building, Larry had reasoned that the best way to confirm the report was to go directly to the plant itself. At least, he figured, he might learn something from whoever was about.

He was somewhat surprised to find the plant closed down, but he had two strokes of luck. The first was when he entered the grounds and came across a member of the maintenance crew, a surly old codger who'd been employed by Wilton Weavers for many years. Larry asked him if he'd seen Jadwin.

"Never have and don't care if I never do," the old codger grunted.

Larry was interested and asked why. The old codger nodded his head toward the closed factory buildings.

"Would you?" he asked. "Throwin' men outa work like that! Hmph. This was a good plant, it was. Made the finest broadloom rugs in the world. And now what? The new owner's changing over to scatter rugs—cheap little scatter rugs, mind you, not worth a dime. And they won't take half the help to make."

And with that he stalked away.

Larry's second stroke of luck was to run into Jadwin himself.

I don't suppose you ever saw Charles Jadwin. He wasn't the steely-eyed, brass-lunged, big business tycoon at all; but was, rather, deceptively quiet and unobtrusive. He was small and soft-spoken and white-haired and pink-faced, and he wore rather a thoughtful, dreamy expression, and one simply couldn't believe that behind it all lay a shrewd, imaginative brain that was the terror of his competitors.

He was courteous enough to Larry. He readily confirmed that he'd bought the factory; in fact, he showed Larry about the empty premises and explained how the looms worked and how Jacquard cards were cut and how spools of yarn were placed on creel frames, and he spoke knowingly of pile warp and tufting carriages. And Larry, who didn't understand a tenth of it, could see that, in his quiet way, old Jadwin was quite delighted with his new acquisition.

All the time, Larry noticed that Jadwin carried about with him a small, rich-colored prayer carpet of queer design. And when Jadwin showed him into his temporary office, Larry observed that when Jadwin sat down behind his desk he placed the carpet at his feet, drawing it up over his ankles as if to keep them warm. But when Larry mentioned that it was a very beautiful carpet, Jadwin changed the subject. And when Larry asked point-blank why Jadwin bought the factory, Jadwin replied, civilly enough, that it wasn't anybody's business but his own.

Well, of course, an $80-a-week reporter doesn't argue with one of the nation's richest men. And Larry was getting up to go and was saying thank you and so forth when he had his inspiration. For Larry had some imagination, too, and he remembered what the old codger had said.

"I think," Larry murmured with just a trace of a wicked smile, "that I know what a transportation expert would be doing manufacturing carpets." He had his hand on the doorknob, but his eyes were gazing steadily at the prayer carpet at Jadwin's feet. "In fact," he added with significance, "I wouldn't wonder but what the *American Journal of Psychiatry* would be interested in your case."

It was brazen extortion. But Larry said the effect of his words was electric. The color drained from Jadwin's pink face; his body stiffened, and his blue-veined hands gripped the arms of his big, walnut chair. But at last he managed to say weakly, "Won't you sit down again, Mr. Gahagan?" And when Larry had reseated himself across the desk from Jadwin, Jadwin offered him a Corona Corona from a handsome rosewood case. And after Jadwin leaned across and lit it with his gold lighter and Larry was sitting back and smoking and Jadwin had regained some of his composure, he asked, "Have you ever traveled much, Mr. Gahagan?"

Larry admitted to some—not the offhand jaunts to Harrisburg or New York. But he'd spent some months in Russia with the Lend-Lease people during the war, and before that he'd taken a cruise.

"Nuisance, isn't it?" Jadwin said. And Larry thought that this, from a man who had spent his life selling travel to the public, was a curious admission.

"Damn nuisance," Jadwin repeated with emphasis. "Tickets, reservations, waiting lines, crowded stations, squawling babies, lurching dining cars. And maybe a flood has washed out a trestle or you can't find a cab or a porter or a hotel room, or you get seasick or airsick. And if you want to visit a few foreign countries, you chase from one consulate to another, fill out forms by the dozen, shell out for fees. And there are passports and visas that are no sense at all. And then, likely as not when you reach where you're going, some smug official finds your documents aren't in order. The customs men ransack your baggage, the quarantine officers check your health. Lord!"

It wasn't a pretty picture that Jadwin drew.

"And then there's your shorter haul, around the city. Noisy subways, crowded buses, wretched street cars, traffic jams, jostling, elbowing, running."

Jadwin sighed.

"Of course," he resumed, "we've come pretty far in transportation since the days of Ulysses and his bags of winds. We've turbo-jet planes now that buzz along between five and six hundred miles an hour. And we've ram jet engines that will do nine hundred, once we design the right plane. And now my own engineers are working on a rocket engine of the fuel and oxidizer type that will do five thousand.

"I've been delighted at this progress, naturally. I've spent all my adult life developing faster and better means of travel. Make travel easy and comfortable for the public, I've always said.

"But I've learned this: airplanes at supersonic speeds aren't the answer. Too complex. They compress space—but they don't annihilate it. And annihilation, after all, is the ultimate goal."

LARRY gasped at this conception. For, you see, while he had already guessed, he had not been prepared for the logical, step-by-step procedure to what he knew was coming. It made him feel a bit apprehensive.

"And how many times," resumed Jadwin, "haven't we all wanted to merely press a button and get where we wanted to go without fuss or bother?"

"Often," Larry agreed politely.

Jadwin nodded. "Just what I told Lansing when—"

"Lansing?"

"The Orientalist over at University Museum. I've financed several of his expeditions. And just before he left on the last one, to Persia, that's when I told him how nice it would be if he could bring me back a magic carpet."

Larry felt the hair on the nape of his neck rising. He had wondered if Jadwin would actually use the term. And now that he had, Larry was moved to wonder at how splendidly a brilliant mind could conceive when it pushed over the borderline of rationality.

Jadwin chuckled reminiscently.

"I'll never forget the expression on Lansing's face," he said. "You could see he thought I was cracked. But he agreed to try. Thought he was humoring me, I imagine. The silly ass. What he'd never learned was that, if you don't make an effort to know, you never will know. He brought this."

And then Jadwin reached down to his feet and drew up the prayer carpet and spread it out on his desk. And Larry studied it.

The carpet had a black weft. The coloring was of wine purple and ruby red and staring white and the central design, under the squared arch peculiar to some prayer rugs, depicted formalized lightning zig-zagging off from a tree-like stem.

"A most unusual Beluchi," Jadwin said. "Made by one of the nomadic Turkoman tribes in Central Asia, about where Western Turkestan and Sinkiang meet. Lansing picked it up in a bazaar much farther east at Ester-Abad. The dealer swore it had the right properties. It's in the knot, you see, a variation of the Sehna.

"'What's the trick?' I asked Lansing when he brought it to me. 'No trick,' Lansing said. 'The man said you just touch it and wish.'

"'Did you try it?' I asked. And Lansing, the practical fool, sniffed in that supercilious way of his, 'Of course not'."

Larry was becoming more uneasy. But he was fascinated, too. Jadwin was so matter-of-fact. And there was something else about him: a business-like intentness that Larry didn't understand until Jadwin complacently observed, "I'll run Cunard out of business. And Grace, too, for that matter. And Ford and General Motors."

"You don't mean . . . ?" Larry began, aghast at the idea.

"Of course," said Jadwin. "Mass production, that's the ticket. We've got our model right here, and we'll copy it on the looms right down to the last thread. I've ordered urial wool from the Hindu Kush —have to be exact, you know—and indigo and madder dyes. And when they arrive —well, five thousand a day. That's how I figure production. Cheapest transportation you ever saw. Everybody can afford one, what with the time-payment plan I'll set up—"

He stopped suddenly, and looked keenly at Larry.

"Ah," he said, and his tone was one of disappointment. "I can see what you're thinking. You're just like Lansing. You have to be shown. Well—where would you like to go?"

Now Larry, when he'd been with the Lend-Lease people, had visited many places in the Soviet Union. But there was one place that had appealed to him particularly; and that was because it was there, in a narrow, winding street of the native quarter where rises the famous turquoise cupola of the Bibi-Khanum, that he had met Nastasia Ivanovna.

She was lithe as the willow that grew along the banks of the nearby Zarafshan; her eyes were the blue of the Asiatic sky, and her skin was the color of the snows that clad the peaks of the Hissars. In her veins flowed the warm blood of the Golden Horde; and other bloods, too, no doubt—of Kirghiz and Arab and of the Bokhara Jews whose ancestors were brought there as prisoners in ancient times by the Babylonian kings. But for all that, she was a child of the new Russia, and she spoke a soft, stilted English that quite delighted the lonely, homesick Larry who knew no other language than his own.

There were discreet meetings at twilight; there were strolls in the yellow sunlight along the terraced gardens of the Hazret Shah-Zindeh outside the city's walls, and there were visits to the dome-crowned tomb of Tamerlane to see the pale, green-blue arabesques and the inscriptions in gold.

"I'll be back," Larry had told her, really meaning it at the time but not under-

standing how it could be done. For he knew that the Soviet Union was hostile to strangers, and that her frontiers were bolted and barred.

So, while he only spoke at all to humor Jadwin, it was this memory that caused Larry to say, as he placed his hand beside Jadwin's on the carpet, "Samarkand."

LARRY said he felt nothing, nothing at all, in the way of motion. Nor did he see anything, in the way of passing scenery, and it must have happened in the time it took to blink his eyes. He had been sitting across from Jadwin, a shaft of warm, spring sunshine illuminating the kaleidoscopic colors of the carpet. And now he was still sitting—but instead of a chair, he was seated upon a carved, stone bench. And instead of the light of the sun, it was a white moonlight that filtered through the delicate, lace-like leaves of an acacia that grew beside them.

Larry's first reaction was of speechless shock. He simply sat and stared, adjusting his eyes to the abrupt change from day to night; for, of course, they had traveled eastward ten thousand miles and it was late the same day they had left Philadelphia. He stared at the bench, at Jadwin sitting on the other end, at the carpet between them, at the acacia tree.

He recognized where he was—for there was the mosque Ulug-beg, rising to its minarets in all its architectural symmetry; and there was the Shir-dar, its enameled tiles gleaming like gems of many colors in the soft moonlight; and there was the Tilla-kari, of the lofty arches. These were the *madrasahs,* the three famous Muslim colleges. And this cloistered, cobble-paved square which the *madrasahs* enclosed was the dream-like, the incomparable Registan, from time immemorial the market place and place of worship of the native city.

Here in the time of Cleitus and Alexander, of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane and Marco Polo the caravan routes of all the Orient crossed. Here even today the shambling camel vied with the steam trains that chugged westward to the Caspian. And here . . .

"Efficient little gadget, isn't it?" Jadwin remarked, and his hand reached out and stroked the carpet.

Larry, still dazed by the sudden mutation of time and space, looked at Jadwin in wonder.

"Sell two million the first year," Jadwin went on. "Put 'em out in two models later. Of course, I've got options on other rug factories. But they'll take a little time catching on."

He gazed about him with interest. He saw the cobalt blue domes of the mosques, the slender towers, the ancient fountain.

"Sort of pretty," he said. He turned his collar up. "But damn cold, too, and not a soul about. Wonder you couldn't wish for a warmer spot with more life to it." He glanced at his watch. It was still only a little after 1:30 P.M., E.S.T. But it was ten hours later in Samarkand. Jadwin made a mental calculation. "Tell you what, young man. I've a mind for a drink and it's just about the cocktail hour in Claridge's. Now suppose we just drop back and stop at London and . . . "

So Larry had to explain why he selected Samarkand, and he told all about his previous visit and he described how beautiful Nastasia Ivanovna was and how the poor girl was probably still waiting for him after five years. And naturally old Jadwin couldn't do anything else but agree to stay. "I'm not one to spoil a romance," he said. But he did grumble quite a bit, especially since neither had come away with so much as a hat or toothbrush. And he grumbled even more when Larry explained that the only hostelries were flea-bitten Red workers' *obshijiti,* which were nothing more than fifth-rate flop houses. And even there, Larry pointed out, the authorities would demand their papers.

So of course the only thing they could do was try to sleep on the bench, for there was nowhere else to go. And yet neither one was very sleepy, for it was still far short of their normal bedtime. All in all, they had a pretty tough night.

In the morning they washed in the fountain. Then they started to scout around for breakfast. That was when the matter of finances came up. It didn't seem very serious at first, even though Larry found he had only a dollar and thirty-five cents on him; for Jadwin had a roll of bills big enough to choke a cow. But then it occurred to them that their money wouldn't be any good in the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic.

"We'll have to find a money exchange," Jadwin said.

"And with no papers?" asked Larry. And then he clapped his hand to his pocket. For he'd just remembered that ever since his return to the United States, he'd carried about with him—as a souvenir, as some people do—a ten-ruble note. He pulled out his wallet, and sure enough, there in a little pocket, neatly folded, was the bill.

By this time the sun was high, people were about and Samarkand seemed even more fantastic than by moonlight. It was an Arabian Nights world of amethyst domes and sea-green minarets and indigo tiles and flat-roofed yellow houses that lined a labyrinth of narrow, cobbled streets. And along the streets were many tea houses.

"*Chai-khanas,*" Larry told Jadwin, "and pretty ratty. But we've got to eat."

They chose one that was a bit more pretentious than the others; a three-sided, shack-like structure on low stilts, shaded by eucalyptus. And there, squatting with turbaned old men on fine Bokhara rugs that caught Jadwin's fancy, they breakfasted on greasy cakes and bowls of tea.

They were the only persons in Western dress, and Jadwin felt conspicuous; and not a little uneasy, too, when he observed that one slant-eyed, yellow-skinned Mongolian kept staring at his Beluchi carpet. But Larry assured him that the people were harmless; that their only fear was of the militia, the local cops.

Then they parted; Larry to hunt up Nastasia Ivanovna, Jadwin to stroll about the town. They'd meet, they agreed, at their bench in the Registan.

IF LARRY had thought about it at all, he would have remembered that the girls of the East rapidly lose both figure and looks. But he didn't, so it came as a nasty shock when he located Nastasia in a small, yellow house two doors from where she'd formerly lived. She was fat and dumpy; her azure eyes had turned watery blue, and her clothes hung about her like a sack. He had difficulty recognizing her. But Nastasia recognized him at once and greeted him effusively. She served him tea and more greasy cakes and some chunks of unsavory fried meat.

He noticed a couple of ragged, unwashed children about; and after awhile Nastasia gót around to admitting they were hers. And just after that, a tall, cloaked Russian strode into the house, and Larry instantly recognized the uniform of the dreaded militia.

"My husband, Philka," Nastasia announced with a giggle. Larry nearly fell through the dirt floor. He said he felt like a stupid stork, standing first on one foot and then on the other. And you can see his position: there he was, not only illegally in the country, but calling on a married woman—something's that just not done in the Orient; and here friend husband shows up, and not only that, friend husband turns out to be the cop on the beat.

Nastasia explained in voluble Russian to her husband all about Larry. And the husband stroked his big mustaches and gave Larry the sour eye, and then started asking Larry—with Nastasia translating—what the devil he was doing back in forbidden Samarkand, especially when Lend-Lease was ancient history and the Americans were about ready to make war on Russia (didn't the Moscow radio say so?) and was Larry just possibly interested in the expansion of the hydro-electric dam nearby?

"And your papers, Tovarich?" And the big lug held out his hand.

All this time, Larry was edging toward the door. And at this question, he turned and ran like sin. He bolted down the street, turned into another, glanced back and saw Philka after him. And Philka was shouting for others to join the chase. Larry leaped over a wall into a courtyard. A dog nipped at his heels and a couple of others began barking. Larry skipped over another wall into an alley, ran down the alley to another street—and at one end of the street he saw Philka leading a mob as diverse as any that ever took part in a manhunt: gaily-robed Uzbeks, bearded Jews, dark-skinned Hindus, Persians, Arabs, Tadzhiks, Afghans, Turkomen. And if ever he needed a demonstration that Samarkand was the melting pot of the East, this was it.

It took some doing, but he shook them finally, thanks to his knowledge of the streets. And he might even have gotten back to Jadwin in time, except that his

nerves were upset; so he stopped at a likely-looking *chai-khana,* and he didn't order tea. He put his kopeks down and called for koumiss.

This koumiss, it seems, is lethal. It's a Tartar drink, distilled from fermented camel's milk. And tough, old camels they must have been; for after three slugs, Larry found the world was a pretty pleasant place, after all. Then he started out, by a circuitous route, to find Jadwin.

He found Jadwin's body instead.

It was at the far end of an alley near the Registan, and a man was bending over it. Larry rushed up. The sound of his feet made the man start. And Larry saw the face of the Mongolian they'd seen in the *chai-khana* and who had shown such interest in Jadwin's rare Beluchi carpet. The man ran off. And to Larry's dismay, he saw that he carried the carpet with him.

He should have given chase then. But his more natural and first concern was Jadwin, for he didn't know, until he bent over and saw the staring eyes and a knife wound in the throat, that Jadwin was dead. Jadwin's pockets were turned out. His clothes were torn. His shirt was bloody. Larry saw all that. And suddenly it occurred to him that if he himself didn't make tracks, he'd be found in a damnably compromising position.

Larry beat it. And now, of course, he was in a real pickle. He had little money, his means of returning home were in the hands of a murderous bandit, and he was already the object of pursuit by a horde of Asiatic villains led by Nastasia's angry husband who would recognize him only too readily. He could not go to the authorities and identify Jadwin's body; he would be arrested for murder. Worse, he could not explain how they had come to Samarkand.

"For if I said I didn't know," Larry told us, "they would think I was crazy with amnesia. And if I told them the truth, they would think I was crazy period."

"Or lying," Max Sax said pointedly.

"Or lying," agreed Larry placidly, and he sipped at his highball. "And the more I remembered Jadwin's contemptuous reference to passports and visas as a 'damn nuisance,' the more I wished to heaven I had even the ghost of same."

HE KNEW (he went on) that his only salvation lay in finding the Mongolian and recovering the carpet; and in this he had what he thought at first was a piece of luck. For he was nearing a dusty crossroads at the edge of the town when he saw before him the Mongolian robber walking past a line of grumpy, knock-kneed camels and bullock wagons.

The man had the carpet rolled under his arm and was walking rapidly toward a wooded park-like slope. Larry figured instantly where he was headed. For beyond the wood lay sun-burned hills leading to the splendid, blue-domed mosque of Shakh-Zinda, the tomb of Tamerlane's wife—and beyond that lay among the encroaching sand dunes the eerie, desolate wilderness of the Aphrosiab.

It was there that Alexander of Macedon murdered his friend, the Black Cleitus; there that Samarkand grew great as a Graeco-Bactrian city. And for the hunted there was refuge among the half-submerged buildings and broken-brick tunnels of the tombs of the ancients.

Larry followed his man.

He thought once that the bandit had discovered him; for he turned his head and stared, but then he hastened on—a queer figure in a dirty yellow robe and sandals, with a shapeless straw hat on his head.

Larry dropped back, pretending to give his attention to something else. It was an arduous walk. They reached the rolling hem of the desert, and the sun boiled down and the heat was as fierce as the cold had been in the Registan the night before. Then, suddenly, the man reached the Aphrosiab and disappeared among the ruins. When Larry reached the spot, he could not find him.

He found himself in a labyrinth of narrow tunnels. There was rubble on the pavement and he had to pick his way carefully. He climbed over the fallen arches of old temples, and rested in the shade of stunted trees that grew out of cracks in the sunken roofs. And then he went on, softly, over coarse grass. And at the turn of an open tunnel, he found his man, sitting on a sculptured stone slab, rolling a cigarette.

The man started up. The carpet dropped from his lap. His hand slid

deftly into the folds of his robe and a knife blade gleamed. Larry waited. The Mongol waited, then sprang forward, tripped on the carpet and sat down on it, hard, his dagger sailing through the air. It was Larry's chance. He made a flying tackle with only one thought in mind. And as his hand touched the fine texture of the carpet, he breathed, "Philadelphia!"

But even as his lips formed the word, the bandit's foot kicked Larry's hand away. And there he was, sprawling among the many-hued tiles of that ancient wreckage, alone, bandit and carpet gone.

"Missed the bus," Larry told us. "Missed it completely. I can't describe how I felt. Sick, that was it. Sick at my stomach. And I was getting a headache, too. From the heat and excitement mostly; but maybe the koumiss had something to do with it. I couldn't say.

"The hell of it was, I knew that this heathen bandit was where I should've been just then. But I had one satisfaction: I knew he'd be in as much trouble in the States as I was out there in Uzbek. At least, that's what I thought.

"I waited till nightfall. Then I started back toward town. I decided the best thing to do was give myself up. Not right away, but after I got up my courage with a few more drinks. I wouldn't say anything about Jadwin, of course. I wouldn't dare. I'd just keep my mouth shut and let matters take their course. But first I needed those drinks."

So he stopped at the first *chai-khana* he found, where he squatted under the dim yellow light of a primitive lantern and, surrounded by robed graybeards, drank more koumiss. And then a few more. Until the moon came up and Samarkand stood out in the night, a fairy city of slim, glistening towers and opalescent domes and tall, tiled arches sweeping up to the silvery blue heavens.

"And at least I had the memory of that," Larry said, "before I passed out."

When he came to, he was under arrest.

"But they didn't announce it till a week later," Lee Bailey protested. I saw what he had in mind. He was calculating distances and international airline travel time. And of course, there was Larry's well-known yen to go places after a spot or two . . .

"That's right," Larry said. "The Reds kept me on ice, pumping me. They thought I wanted to blow up their dam."

In the silence that followed, Joe, the steward, set another round of drinks before us. Then Max Sax said, "That koumiss. It must be pretty powerful stuff."

Larry nodded.

"That's just the point. It's what I had in mind when I asked if evidence mightn't be evanescent and yet still have authority. Like my hangover. I'm not one to have 'em, you know. And yet I had this one when I came back, as everybody in the club knows. It was there, and then it went away in due course. And it wasn't anything that would come back so you could use it as proof in court. And there was only the one place I could have gotten it . . . "

He had logic with him. At least, I thought he had. But Max remarked, and I thought I detected a touch of sarcasm. "And in a way, you could also call the magic carpet evanescent evidence."

Whether Larry failed to recognize the sarcasm or chose to ignore it, I don't know. But he replied, "Yes, that's so. And there was one thing more." He tapped the newspaper clipping that he still held. It was dated May 8th, the day after he and Jadwin disappeared. "And negative enough in its way, too, as evidence," he admitted. He explained that he'd run across it while thumbing through the back files after his return. "I was looking up what they'd said about Jadwin's disappearance."

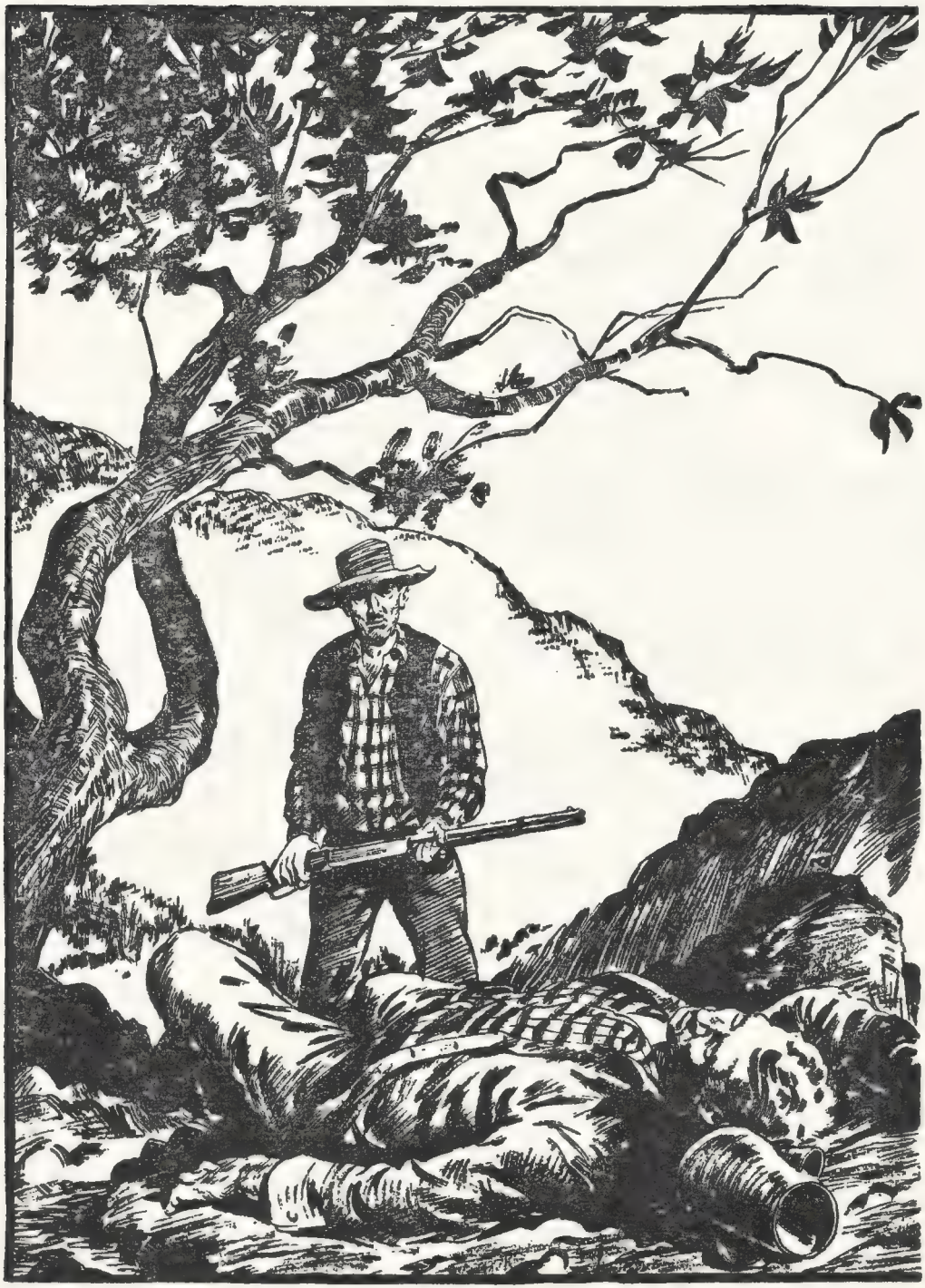
We all read it then. It was about a ragged Asiatic found wandering that morning along the Philadelphia waterfront.

"He was strangely dressed," the story said, "and he carried a small but apparently expensive Oriental carpet. In the belief he was one of several Chinese seamen who recently deserted the British freighter *Empire Star* at Pier 36 South Wharves, he was taken before the U.S. Commissioner on a charge of illegal entry. Immigration agents were puzzled as to how he disappeared from a guarded detention room while awaiting his hearing. An inquiry is under way."

I looked at Lee Bailey and Lee looked at Max.

"You see what happened," Larry said, lifting his glass. "He'd learned the secret."

The lad heard the sound of a rifle. Then the old man was sprawled at his feet.



ILLUSTRATED BY
MONROE EISENBERG

CARNEY put Young Bob to bed deftly. He used the side of his fist in a quick chop under the redheaded lad's ear. All the life went from Young Bob's legs and he dropped.

By the time his brain began to move again Young Bob realized he was on the ground, rolled in his own blankets. Carney was unkinking a tight pack of baling wire. In a few moments Young Bob was wired tightly inside the woolen covers.

By

STEVE FRAZEE

Even Young Bob's freckles were pale when he raised his head the few inches allowed by the wire around his neck. He yelled words at Carney that would have brought a gruff reprimand from Dave.

But old Dave was dead now.

Huge in the fading light that dusked the jagged cliffs behind him, Carney watched quietly. His wide face, the color of fresh beef, was rough with a dense growth of blond wire stubble that gave his chin and cheeks a raspy look. His deep-set eyes were unreadable as he looked at his work.

He turned and walked past the campfire toward the lean-to against the cliff, moving with litheness that indicated a powerful body perfectly coordinated with the cold drive of his brain. Like a wolverine, Young Bob thought. The man was scarcely human.

Certainly there had been something inhuman in Carney's attack on the camp an hour before. Young Bob had been kneeling with one hand on a shovel, waiting for a water hole to fill near the driblet of water fifty feet from camp. Old Dave was standing beside him holding a coffee pot and looking at the sky.

"We're set," Dave said. "All but the weather." He hesitated. "And unless one of them ten-day miners tried to follow us in here."

YOUNG BOB was a little tired and hungry enough to eat yellow pine bark. They'd had a busy half day, getting camp set, building a rock and earth forge for the tiny blower that Elk, the pack mule, had carried in with the rest of their gear and supplies.

Near the forge Young Bob had built a canvas-covered lean-to with one side hard against a cracked rib of granite.

"Water's the main worry," Dave said. "When she freezes we're done. We got this little bit here and that trickle coming through the rock by the lean-to, but that loses itself as soon as it hits ground." He frowned at the sky. "One good freeze and our panning water is gone."

"Just give us three, four days working this ground and we won't have to worry till next summer," Young Bob said.

Dave forgot the sky and looked at the little boulder-strewn basin. Once it had been a pond, a veritable settling tank for gold-bearing talc washed in ancient times from the cliffs.

"Under that mess of rocks this little pocket is the richest placer I ever seen!" Dave clicked his tongue. "I found that out last summer, and if I hadn't been sick most of this summer we'da been here before the weather—"

Old Dave grunted softly.

The lad heard the sound of a rifle. Then the old man was sprawled at the lad's feet and the hole by the rivulet was filling with blood faster than water. Young Bob clutched the familiar leather jacket and turned Dave over. The old man was dead. Old Dave . . . who six years before had taken him into his cabin after the quick sweep of pneumonia made an orphan of a crying, bewildered boy.

His brain inert from shock, Young Bob saw but felt little interest as a big man in stagged pants stood by the lean-to and smashed Dave's rifle against the rock. Then the intruder walked toward the water hole. He carried a long-barreled .30-30 in his left hand. Young Bob recognized him then. Sim Carney, a drifting miner who had wandered into Aspen City two weeks before.

Carney stopped ten feet away. "Plant him," he said flatly.

That jarred Young Bob from his stupor. He rose and charged straight in to smash the thin lips, to pulverize that beef-colored face. He wound up sitting by Dave, his chest on fire. Carney watched him quietly. "Plant him."

Young Bob tried three more times before the strength to try was knocked out of him by a man who stood slightly sidewise and never moved the rifle in his left hand. Nothing about Carney seemed to move, yet each time Young Bob went at him Carney's right hand crushed against the lad's chest. The last time he went down Young Bob lay and tugged for breath. Carney searched his pockets, removed Young Bob's knife and stepped back.

The lad rolled to the shovel, got both hands on it and struggled to get up.

Then the rifle moved and Carney said, "That's just to dig with, kid."

Now Dave was buried; there was a new water hole upstream in the sparse aspens where the shovel had gone through a few inches of leaf mold and mud before strik-

ing gravel; Elk was stirring uneasily where he was tied in the trees behind the lean-to; and Young Bob was wired securely in his blankets.

From the lean-to there came no sound.

He worked one hand upward. When it jammed between the wire around his chest and his sore ribs the pain brought a gasp. A few moments later and Carney was standing over him. "I sleep light," the big man said.

Given a half hour of interrupted turning and struggling, Young Bob knew he could work free. Tomorrow night perhaps. Or the next night. But there wouldn't be too many nights to try. When it froze Carney would need him no longer. Young Bob knew he would live as long as he helped Carney work the placer. One man couldn't drill the rocks that littered the basin because there was a seven-pound striking hammer in camp, and even a brute like Carney couldn't turn steel and swing a hammer that heavy. Boulders sat almost shoulder to shoulder all over the basin. To get at any panning ground worthwhile, rock had to be moved first.

TOWARD morning Young Bob slept fitfully. Between naps he heard the faint trickle of water running in the rock near the lean-to; and his mind kept bringing up sharply the sight of a water hole filling with blood.

Carney unbound him at dawn, pointed to the coffee pot and said, "Water!"

Over near the lean-to Young Bob saw Carney's rifle. It wasn't many steps, but Carney kept his body between the weapon and the lad all the time.

At the water hole Young Bob thought desperately. He could run for it now—straight for the cover of those yellow pine trees at the edge of the basin. They weren't more than sixty yards away. He looked over one shoulder. Carney had the rifle now and was watching him, daring him to try it.

While he cooked breakfast Young Bob subdued his desire to try once more with his bare hands. Better to be killed outright now than kicked around only to be killed later. No—that wouldn't do. Carney was too watchful. "Use your head instead of your back all the time," Dave had been fond of saying. "You can beat a tough problem if you just keep on figuring hard enough."

After breakfast Young Bob said, "The mule ought to be turned loose. He's got to eat and drink."

Carney watched without expression. That was the trouble with the man—you could never tell what he was thinking. Then, carrying his rifle, Carney walked over to the animal. He unsnapped the halter. As the mule started to turn Carney fired a shot that cut a long, shallow gash in the animal's rump. Elk kicked like a gut-shot deer, squealed in rage and loped as straight for home as the rocks in the basin would let him.

"Go it, Elk! Run!" Young Bob yelled frantically.

The mule was almost to cover when Carney raised the rifle casually. It spoke and Elk went down with the abruptness of finality.

"You figured to kill him all the time!" Young Bob cried.

"Sure," Carney said. "But I didn't want him stinking up the camp."

Till mid-morning Young Bob turned steel while Carney struck the drill with measured, tireless blows. Each time the lad changed drills, feeling the cold, hard steel free in his hands, he looked up to see Carney poised above him with the long-handled hammer balanced for a quick blow.

Just before they had finished the hole the clatter of a small rock sliding on the cliffs caused Carney to turn his head. Young Bob had the drill clear and was raising it when Carney brought the handle down on the heavy muscle at the right side of Young Bob's neck. The weight of the hammer was only a few inches from the point of impact.

"Twist steel," Carney said.

Young Bob turned the drill with one hand until the hole was finished. His right arm was still almost useless when Carney spitted the loaded hole and herded the lad to shelter behind a large rock at the edge of the basin. Young Bob's heart jumped when he saw the two sticks of dynamite protruding from Carney's jumper pocket. As the blast tore the boulder aside the lad moved as if startled, brushing against Carney. The big man grunted and shoved the youth away violently and Young Bob lay face down for a few moments—just

long enough to jam a stick of dynamite against his bare skin at belt line.

His shoulder felt a little better as he cleared the shattered rock away while Carney watched. Then Young Bob had to dig a basin in the middle of the tiny stream in order to supply a water hole for panning.

He sat against a rock with his feet and wrists tied while Carney panned. For the first time Young Bob saw expression in the man's dark eyes as pan after pan yielded long strings of coarse gold. Carney worked feverishly. He flung his jumper aside, but sweat still darkened his shirt around the armpits and ran from his face. There was no stop for dinner.

Young Bob shivered as the late fall sun went down. The day seemed colder than the previous one. Winter had held off a long time, but it couldn't be far away now. He rubbed his bound wrists against the trim cylinder under his shirt. Already it was beginning to blister his skin. If he only had some way to explode it. Fire wouldn't work. Hurling it against a rock wouldn't explode it. Still, there ought to be some way . . .

Carney panned like a fiend, dumping his take into a coffee can. Several times Young Bob saw him find large nuggets.

The youth rubbed his wrists against his legs. Suddenly he stopped. There, in his pocket! He'd been rubbing against it all the time. A .22 cartridge. Maybe it would serve as a detonator. Now for the rest of the plan . . .

IT WAS late when Carney quit. He'd skimmed the best from the small area cleared by shooting the rock. Tomorrow they'd have to drill and blast again—if Carney was alive to drill tomorrow.

The lad knew that Carney was watching him as Young Bob knelt by the water hole that night with the coffee pot. The light was bad and Young Bob might have had a chance to make a run for it, but he had a better idea. It didn't take him long to punch a hole in one end of the stick of explosive with an aspen twig, bury the cartridge there and put the dynamite back under his shirt against the blistered skin. His plan was simple. While he was cooking he'd lay the dynamite in the fire with the end that held the .22 cartridge where the flame was hottest. He'd mask it with the frying pan a few moments. Couldn't take too long. Then he'd walk as far from the fire as Carney would allow him and pretend to collapse with a pain in his shoulder. He'd be lying flat when the explosion came and Carney probably would be standing over him, exposed to flying rock from the fire site. It might work. It had to work.

The night was almost cold enough to freeze right now.

Carney seemed to watch Young Bob closer than ever as the lad cooked, but once in a while his eyes strayed toward the placer. Squatted by the fire with a pan of bacon the lad began to withdraw the primed explosive. He had a place picked out—where the flame was hottest.

The stick was clear when Carney's foot crunched against the boy's sore shoulder, knocked Young Bob sprawling. Carney's boot came down on the lad's wrist and the big miner grabbed the dynamite in an effortless swoop. Still standing on the redhead's wrist he examined the cylinder closely, grunted when he saw the punched end. He cut through the greasy paper with a pocket knife and dug the .22 cartridge out.

"Might've worked," he commented. "Knew you had it all the time."

He ripped the pockets loose from Young Bob's overalls. "Just one shell, huh?"

Young Bob went to bed without resistance that night. He ached all over, felt discouraged and kept wishing old Dave could somehow still be alive. Tonight he heard Carney snoring lightly in the lean-to, listened to the trickle of water running down the cracked granite until exhaustion brought rest.

The sky was gray and a thin, bitter wind filtered through the leafless aspens when the lad went for water at dawn next morning. Maybe he should run for it now, in spite of the rifle. Tonight it would freeze for sure. Then Carney's work would be over and Young Bob would be lying by Dave. Something Dave had said just before Carney's bullet struck him began to stir in the youth's mind. He ran one hand into the mud and leaf mold that edged the water hole. Tonight it would freeze for sure . . .

Carney drove himself and Young Bob hard as they drilled that morning. Slyly

the redhead began to take full quarter turns on the steel, decreasing the cutting speed and increasing the chance of breaking a bit. His stratagem lasted only a few moments.

"Turn that steel right!" Carney growled angrily.

"To hell with you! I quit!"

"You know what happens if you do."

"It's going to freeze solid tonight anyway!"

"Might clear up and be warm tomorrow."

"Fat chance and you know it! I quit right now!"

Carney eyed him quietly. "You won't quit. You ain't that kind. You'll stay alive as long as you can, figuring you've got a chance to get clear. You ain't got none, but—"

"The hell I ain't!" Young Bob could have cut his own tongue out.

Carney's red face showed just a flicker of a triumphant smirk. "Twist steel—and take your chance."

YOUNG BOB watched glumly while Carney reaped another rich haul that afternoon. The murderer's eyes glittered as he panned, glittered when he dumped gold into the coffee can. Young Bob had seen the same frozen look on gamblers' faces when they waited for cards to come out of the box.

It was bitter cold when the boy got water that evening. Carney knew it was going to freeze, but maybe he was so wild about gold that he really thought there might be a thaw tomorrow. Huh! In a day or two snow would lie in the basin—snow that would be there all winter, covering everything . . . the rocks . . . old Dave's grave.

He raised the pot and drank slowly. At the same time his right hand was busy slipping handfuls of mud and leaves under his shirt, under his woolens too, so there wouldn't be so much chance of Carney's seeing the wetness. Carney had missed the stick of dynamite but he wouldn't miss what was going against Young Bob's skin this time.

The boy's skin rebelled at the coldness of the mud and leaves, but he kept scooping. Then he washed his hand and went back to the fire with the coffee pot.

"You're not so smart, Carney," Young Bob said as he cooked supper. "The gold you heard about old Dave bringing out last fall was only a little of what he panned."

Carney said nothing. A tiny fire lit in his eyes, then subsided as he watched Young Bob.

"He buried a whole canful of nuggets bigger than any you found." Young Bob's whole body felt as cold as the damp mass against his stomach. If Carney would fall for the lie only a few minutes . . .

The big miner's eyes were cold now, but he watched the boy's face keenly.

"Yeah?"

"A whole canful of yellow nuggets. I'd tell you where too—if—if—" Young Bob's brain went numb as he tried to think of something to bargain for. No use to ask for his freedom. Still, he had to say something. It didn't look as if he had fooled Carney any so far.

"A whole canful of big yellow nuggets—if you'll let me go. I know where—"

Carney grabbed Young Bob's right arm and spun the lad around, jerking the arm upward mercilessly between the shoulder blades.

"Where is it?"

"Do you promise— Ow! My arm!"

The pressure increased.

"It's under the lean-to!" Young Bob gasped out.

Carney released him and the youth stumbled a few steps to lean against the cracked slab of granite by the lean-to. He rubbed his shoulder as if it pained beyond all use. "We built the shelter right over it . . ."

The murderer put one hand on the front of the lean-to as if he intended to pull it down. His face was redder than ever and a vein was pulsing in his forehead. He tossed his rifle barrel outward into the shelter and said, "Stay right here where I can see you!" Then he folded one side of the blankets back and began to probe with his hands at the ground beneath.

Young Bob leaned against the rock. His legs were in Carney's sight, but his body was partly hidden by the slab of granite, and his right hand was busy under his shirt, busy against the face of the rock. In less than a minute he was wiping his hand in desperate haste against the side of his

(Continued on page 146)

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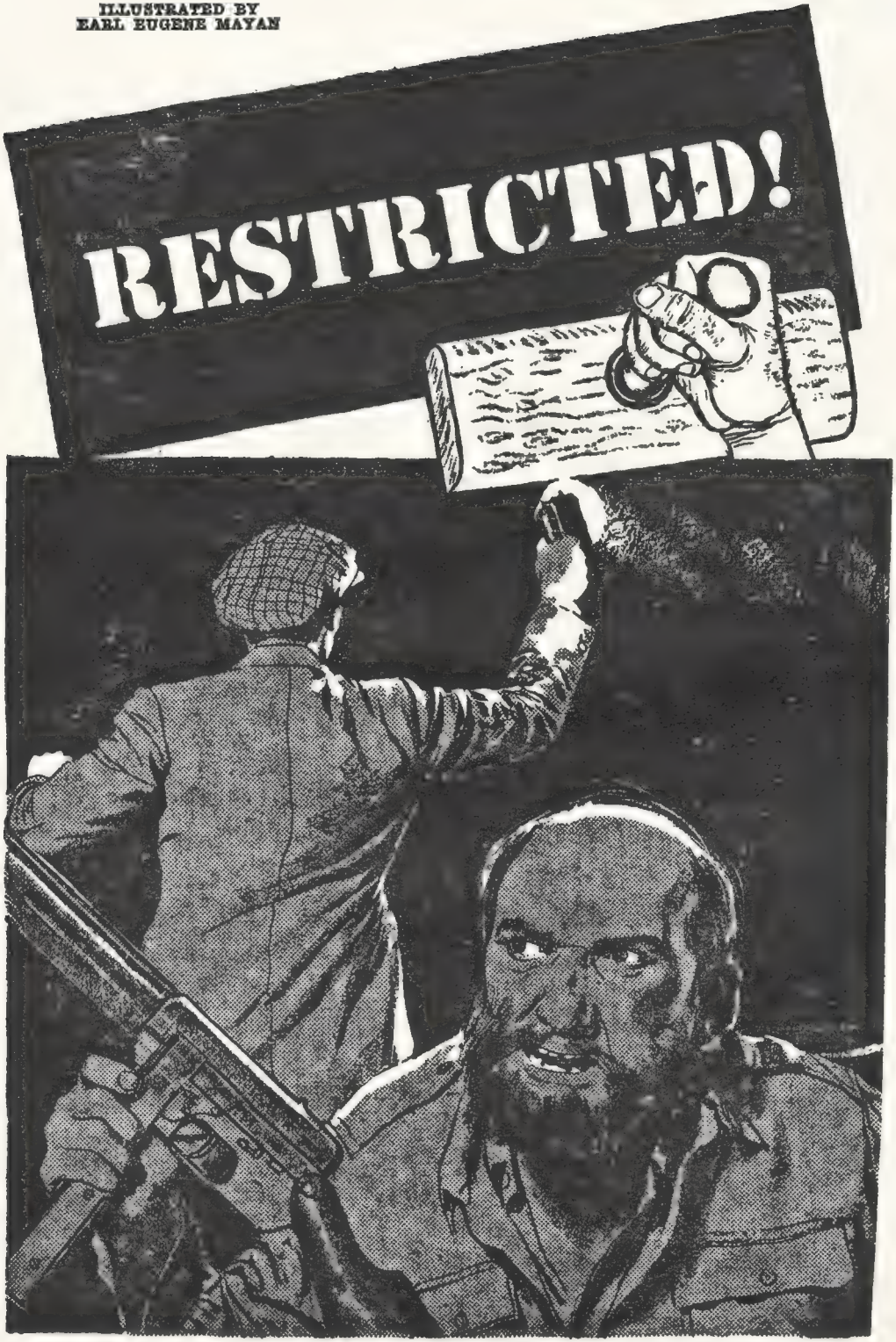
EARL EUGENE MAYAN



By GEORGES SURDEZ

THE STORY THUS FAR:

THE year is 1947; the place, the Jura Mountain region of France close to the Swiss border—where BRUCE KERRIGAN, former OSS officer now employed by an American firm in Paris, has gone to rest and recover from a nervous condition brought on by the war. He is staying at the Matignon farm, home of his war-time friend, ALAIN MATIGNON, who had been killed at his side during a mission into Occupied Brittany. Kerrigan's need for a change of scene had coincided with the receipt of a letter from Alain's young brother, NICOLAS, begging the American to visit the Matignons and mysteriously hinting an urgent need for his help.

At the Matignon home, Kerrigan meets MOTHER JEANNE, and an older brother, PROSPER, a big, moody chap who manages the extensive farm. From Nicolas and others he learns of the mystery-shrouded, barb-wire barricaded sanatorium atop the mountain close by, operated by a DR. NORDSTROM, known to have been a collaborationist during the Nazi Occupation. No one from the village is allowed inside its heavily-guarded gates and the wealthy patients presumably receiv-

Bruce stopped and took out the small automatic—aiming four feet over the glaring eye of the torch, he fired once, twice.

ing treatment there are never seen outside. And Nicolas reveals the reason for his SOS to Kerrigan. His friend, ALBERT, a handsome, reckless lad somewhat older than Nicolas, had become involved with a girl employed at the Sana and, shortly after, had disappeared. Nicolas suspects he learned too much concerning the Sana—and was disposed of.

The following night, Nicolas sneaks out of the farmhouse and pays a visit to the Sana, in an attempt to learn his friend's fate. He returns badly wounded in the leg, with a tale of having been pursued by the guards and shot. Telling Prosper only that the boy is ill, Mother Jeanne calls in BEJART, a trusted friend, who goes for DR. SEZILLE, former Resistance leader. After patching up Nicolas' leg, Sezille talks with Kerrigan and confides his hope of piercing the veil of secrecy surrounding the Sana and exposing the illicit activities he believes are taking place there.

Dr. Nordstrom drives up to the farm, accompanied by his husky chauffeur, LEONARD. Nordstrom has learned of the boy's "illness" from Prosper and announces he is taking him to the Sana for treatment. Mother Jeanne explains that Nicolas is under the care of Dr. Sezille and refuses to turn him over to the Sana's Director. At Nordstrom's order, Leonard attempts to use force—and Kerrigan knocks him down. Threatening retaliation, the doctor retires.

Still dubious about Nicolas' story of the night before, Kerrigan goes to his room and demands the truth. Nicolas insists he was not only shot by the Sana's guards but that they intended to kill him. That, he says, is what happened to Albert . . .

PART II

"I'VE sent for Bejart," Mother Jeanne informed Bruce when he re-entered the kitchen. "What did he have to tell you, that brat?"

"I'm not supposed to tell you," Bruce shrugged. "He doesn't want you worried or upset! Fine time to think of it. But I think you better know, you'll see it's important." She listened impassively as he repeated parts of the boy's story. "By the way, Mother Jeanne, who is Bejart and what does he do?"

"He's the bone-setter and he does a little of everything—poaching's what he likes best. He hangs around this place a lot, because I was a friend of his wife. She died in 1923. She'd be an old woman like me now, but in his mind, she's young and pretty."

"What can he do about all this?"

"Well, you saw he got us a doctor we could trust." She shrugged. "Also, Prosper is afraid of him. Prosper could break him in two, but he's afraid just the same. See, Bejart knows everything about everybody for miles and miles around. During the Occupation, he worked with the Resistance, of course—he did some wonderful things—for instance, he found an English pilot who'd broken his leg landing in a wood. He took care of him, got Doctor Sezille up there, hid him four months.

"He's smart, finds out everything, although he can hardly sign his name. For instance, when you first wrote me, mentioning Alain, I showed him the letter, read it to him, rather. Well, about a week later, he came in and told me you were all right, that he'd checked up in Burgundy—you and Alain and another American, a sergeant, were to meet somebody named Lourceau—"

"Right," Bruce said. He remembered that name, because he had had a difficult time keeping from uttering it during his séances with the German police.

"You were turned in by a man named Paul Mesclous—"

"I didn't know who'd done it—"

"He was found hanging in his attic a fortnight later," Mother Jeanne explained, with a gentle smile. "Like Judas, Bejart says, only Judas didn't have his ankles and wrists strapped. That's Bejart—he went all the way from here to Beaune to find out if my Alain had been avenged. If it hadn't been done, he'd have done it."

"You think he knows about what goes on at the Sana?"

"He'll find out." Mother Jeanne looked toward the door. "That may be him now."

But it was not Bejart. Corporal of Gendarmes Flutet, followed by his shadow, Private Macard, entered the kitchen. The noncom gestured a refusal as Toinette reached into a locker for the wine.

"Service matter. All my excuses, Mother Jeanne." He touched his mustache, cleared his throat. "Are you Kerrigan, Bruce, Charles, American nationality?"

"You know very well I am," Bruce said.

"You will then report immediately to the Cantonal Gendarmerie at Aurebois. I'd advise you to take your bags, as you may be detained a couple of days." Flutet spoke very precisely, with assurance in his voice, but his eyes were restless.

"Have you the warrant, the summons, whatever paper is needed?"

"No, not as yet. My instructions were received by phone."

"Are you arresting me on your own re-

sponsibility?" Bruce asked. "I'd suggest you be careful, as this business may go very far. I hold a reserve commission in the American Army, remember."

"I'm not arresting you, Monsieur. I am merely transmitting a message."

"It sounded very much like an order."

"You refuse to comply?"

"Absolutely." Bruce smiled. "You may arrest me."

"I have the right to do so if you refuse to obey a request."

"Go ahead. But the moment I leave here, Madame Matignon will wire the American Embassy at Paris, and troubles will start to rain around here. By the way, what do they want to see me about?"

"An affair of blows and lacerations—"

Bruce touched his cheek, which was bruised and swollen. "I was struck first, intervening for your co-citizeness, Madame Matignon. I don't move without a warrant."

Bejart had come in quietly. He asked the corporal a few questions, then shrugged pityingly. "My poor Flutet! You're not dealing with a tramp, but with a gentleman, and a former captain, too. I know you were told what to do. Go back and tell the mayor it didn't work and he can phone the Sana and tell them to make legal charges. You'll see they won't. Give them a glass of wine, Toinette, and let them go. Don't sulk, my little ones, drink and scram." He turned to Mother Jeanne. "Wanted to see me? I was putting the apron on a cow at Varende's farm. Came right up."

"Bruce will tell you. It's about what happened to Colas."

In Bruce's room, Bejart sat astride a chair and listened, smoking his pipe, blinking his eyes.

"Pretty goings on," he concluded.

"They say you know everything around here," Bruce resumed. "What about this? Think the kid's telling the truth?"

"I think so. Can't be sure with a kid of fourteen. What's sure is that he was shot. But they can say it happened on their property. The guards are licensed for guns. What looks bad and we can't let happen is taking the kid up there. There's something phony going on at the Sana, but whether it's illegal or not, I wouldn't know. The guys up there are paying for privacy, paying good from what I hear. And there's no law against having cutups. About who is in there, Doctor Sezille could find out, he's in the business, and somewhere the list of patients must be registered, some bureau or other."

"Suppose there are Boches hiding there?"

"I don't want to know. Me, I'm through. For years, I worked like a dog, risked my hide every day. Ask anybody. What for? Doctor Sezille and a couple of other men who knew what I'd done asked for the Legion of Honor for me and they turned me down—they gave me the Resistance Medal which I don't wear. Why couldn't I get the cross? Because of a few days in the can now and then, for poaching or something like that."

"But, see here, Bejart—one boy's missing and another's shot!"

"Albert was a nosy guy. And there's no saying he wouldn't turn up somewhere. There's nothing you can do about anything, legally. I'll go down to the village and phone to Doctor Sezille, tell him what's going on. He won't let anything happen to the kid. He's got no pull with the authorities, but every guy who was active in the Resistance will stick to him."

CHAPTER V

NEUTRAL TERRITORY

BRUCE was somewhat irritated by the old man's casual manner. He knew that he was up against a tough situation. The attempt of the gendarmes to embarrass him into leaving the region must have been inspired by some powerful agent. It was a bluff, but a bluff that might have worked on an ordinary vacationer.

The influence of the Sana, or of its Director, Nordstrom, was not extraordinary. Such things occurred everywhere, in every country. Bruce's father had told him, long ago, a rather sinister story about a like situation in a mill town of New England. The family owning the mills had come to consider itself above normal laws, right in free America, and mayor, sheriff, police, business people, had obeyed like the loyal subjects of a feudal lord. It had taken five years of persistent effort to bring a young man of the ruling clan to trial, for seduction and murder.

Bruce could understand Nordstrom. The man had been in charge up there for close to a quarter of a century. Within the limits of the Sana, he ruled like a king. He would not be the first chap to confuse his own interests, his whims, with the public weal and to consider that he had the right to life and death over those who interfered with his authority. It was very human. To one who had seen, as Bruce had repeatedly, majors, captains, second-lieutenants become arrogant, savage miniature satraps in their sphere of command, Nordstrom was not phenomenal. Authority is like alcohol in that it takes a strong head to absorb large doses without consequent dilating of the ego.

What was more difficult to understand was the hold Nordstrom had on prosperous local men, like the mayor, who had dispatched the gendarmes to expel him upon a mere phone call, and Prosper himself. It could not be merely a desire to keep the trade of the Sana, for farm produce could be disposed of in France at almost any price. The controls that existed on paper could be avoided in a dozen ways. And supposing even as many as two hundred people at the establishment, still it was a very small outlet for the large farms in the region.

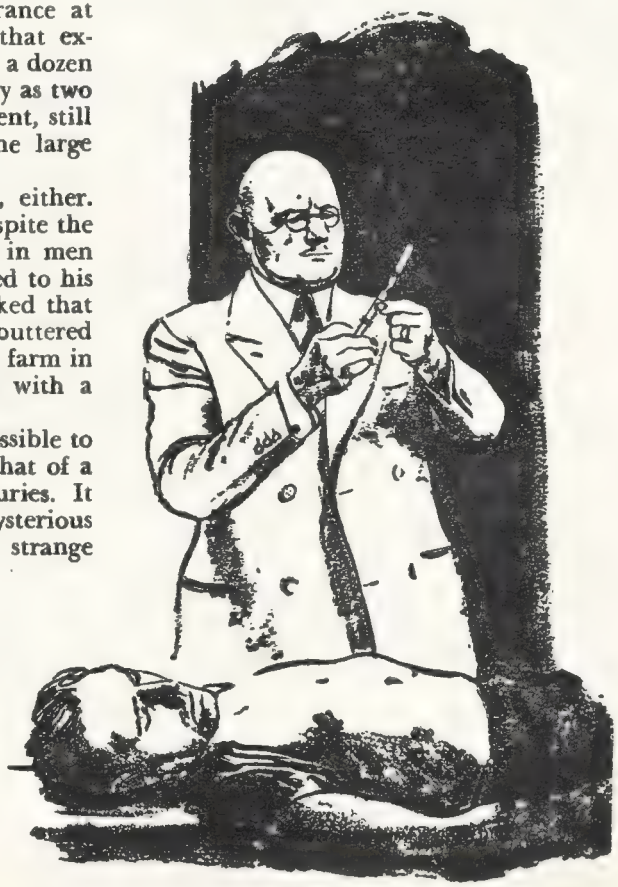
Prosper was not extraordinary, either. Bruce now recalled that Alain, despite the idealization of relatives common in men long away from home, had referred to his brother in a guarded tone, remarked that "he knows what side his bread is buttered on." Prosper was trying to get the farm in his own name, was not satisfied with a power of attorney.

What did he want? It was impossible to think of him living any life but that of a farmer, enjoying softness and luxuries. It was just the unexplainable, mysterious greed latent in certain people, as strange as the killer instinct.

Life at the farm continued at its normal rhythm. The workers returned at dusk, the milk from the second milking was taken to the dairy—in the summer, the cows often remained at pasture overnight. Prosper returned with the others, washed himself at the pump in the yard. To see him kiss his mild, shadow-like little wife, lift his small children high in his huge hands, no one would have suspected him of anything unkind, sinister.

Mother Jeanne supervised the serving of supper. The days of mountain air had their effect on Bruce and he ate with an appetite that surprised him. The cards were brought out later, and it was evident that Prosper hoped to escape an interview with his mother.

It was quite dark when the headlights of a car whitened the small windows, and a car rolled into the yard. Bruce felt a moment of uneasiness, and he saw that his



Nordstrom had been in charge up there for close to a quarter of a century. Within the limits of the Sana, he ruled like a king.

partners also had tensed. But it was Doctor Sezille, jovial, bustling.

"So you conspired to swipe my patient, Matignon?"

"News gets around quickly around here," Prosper grumbled. "The Director stopped his car to speak to me this morning, and I mentioned that my brother was sick, and he said he'd look him over and take him up there if he thought it advisable. What the devil could I say? He didn't mention money, and there's a guy who gets who knows how much, a thousand, five thousand francs for a consultation. Couldn't be rude to him. But I knew he'd get mother sore at me."

"We understand you just wanted to be polite, Prosper."

Sezille went upstairs with Mother Jeanne, remained a few minutes. When he returned, he nodded toward the table. "Well, the American, and you Bejart, I might as well look you over."

"You sick, Bejart?" Prosper asked.

"Not sick exactly. But I have pains in my back."

"You can cure others, but you run to the doctor when it's you—"

"That's often the way in our profession," Sezille said cheerfully. "Believe me, if I had a sprain, I'd call in Bejart." Bruce and the bone-setter followed him into Bruce's room. "All right—roll up your sleeve, Kerrigan, and I'll take your arterial tension—might as well, you know—"

And while he was mechanically taking the blood pressure, he spoke in a lower voice to Bejart: "Look, Monsieur Kerrigan will bring me up to date on things, but we must have a chance to talk, so I'll drive him out.

"I think the people up there realize that whatever Colas has to say he's said by now. That they won't try anything queer. But you never know. I'll take him away tonight, it's arranged with his mother. But while we're out, don't let anything happen to him. He's had a lot of excitement, and he mustn't be disturbed. Understand?"

"Under no circumstances, Doctor?"

"Right. Are you armed?"

Bejart reached down the front of his blue blouse, brought a regulation Mauser .38 into view, dropped back.

"Is it that serious?" Bruce asked.

"You're asking me? Nordstrom didn't disturb himself in person for nothing."

AFTER a word of explanation to his hosts, Bruce followed the doctor to the car. Sezille took the wheel, backed out of the yard, then to Bruce's astonishment he started up the mountain, not toward the village.

"Too many people around, in cafes, never knows who hears—"

Sezille evidently knew the road, took the turns of the twisting highway expertly, fast. He drove but for a short time, brought his machine to a stop at the side of the road three kilometers from the Matignon farm. The silence squeezed on them at first like a material substance oozing from the darkness. Then they became aware of the sounds, shrilling insects, the calls of an owl, the distant dingdong of the bell on a restless cow. They lighted cigarettes, then Sezille got out and swept the beam of a large torch in every direction.

"One never knows, does one? Might come away up here and then park close to someone." He broke into a laugh. "Mostly, it's such a luxury to dare to show a light. I still expect to see the blue lamps of a Boche patrol car come around the bend any moment—but you know the sensation, you weren't strictly a line soldier."

"Yes, I know the sensation," Bruce agreed. He related the scene with Prosper, which he felt sure had been a first attempt to smoke him out, his interview with the Doctor-Director and his chauffeur, what Nicolas had told him. "Now, what do you think? In my mind, there isn't the least doubt that Albert was either killed or is being held up there—" he laughed shortly and used the local word, "at the Sana."

"And not for his health, eh?" Sezille accepted another cigarette, was silent a while.

"I know that the intelligent course for me would be to get out and let the Matignons settle their family problems, forget about the Sana—" Bruce hesitated a second, "but I can't."

"That's the trouble," Sezille agreed. "One can't. Something must be done, but we must be very careful."

"Why? There must be someone honest somewhere, with authority to order a search—an investigation."

"And what good would that do? Things are pretty well covered by now." The doctor paused a moment. "Look here, Kerri-

gan, haven't you guessed that there must be a reason for Nordstrom to get away with so much? Aside from dishonesty, graft, bribes and so on?"

"I'll bite," Bruce snapped. "What?"

"The Sana was one of the unofficial Bastilles of the Third Republic. Whether it has resumed that purpose under the present regime, I don't know. But Vichy shipped a couple of patients there. Anyway, the old prestige lingers in the minds of officials."

"You mean there are such places?" Bruce laughed gently. "I've always thought it was imagination, as improbable as political assassination by some secret police or other. I mean in a fairly civilized country, like France or the United States, or Great Britain."

"See here, Kerrigan, a little reasoning will convince you that every government must have such places. When something like the Panama Canal scandal or the Stavisky case, in France, or your own petroleum scandal, the Samovar Fields—"

"Teapot Dome, Doctor."

"What matters, eh? Well, to start with, while there is no such thing as political assassination, of course, one notes a wonderful frequency of what one might term conveniently coincidental suicides. Men who obviously were self-centered suddenly think nothing of taking the long voyage to avoid embarrassing others by revelations. A noisy senator is found with his head on a gas-log, a judge is found on the rails.

"But one cannot count absolutely on suicides. Suppose a famous man is mixed up in a shabby deal and cannot be brought to trial without shaking the existing order? He develops nervous trouble, softening of the brain and he is placed in a sanatorium, the investigation to be postponed until he is cured. That cure can take a long, long time."

Sezille evidently liked that subject. He spoke with bitter irony.

"I tell you, whatever we may think just now, such places are needed. For there are the genuine cases, too—prominent men who really go mad, with a visible, awkward insanity. Just about the time you were born, a president of France had to be taken out of circulation. Even for a president, he had become too eccentric.

"To be frank, much as I despise politicians, I don't believe that their percentage of insanity or senile decay is higher than among grocers, stone-masons, actors or doctors. But they do attract more attention and the politicians running the show get the impression that the voters' reaction will be that the mass of deputies, senators et cetera is in the same plight.

"If a man's family happens to be very wealthy and discreet, the man drops from sight automatically. However, there are important men without wealth, and families that cannot be trusted.

"TAKE the case of a man universally respected, whose achievements had become part of the national heritage, who had become, let's say, a cabinet minister, a member of the Institute of Sciences, a Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor. Around sixty to sixty-five, he develops a penchant for some bizarre indulgence, for instance appears at some official dinner wearing a woman's evening gown under his coat—go ahead and laugh, it happened—that presents a nice problem. His name is in the schoolbooks read by a million little Frenchmen, who'd recognize his name in the papers.

"So you call in a specialist, such as Doctor Nordstrom, who prescribes a long rest under observation. Take another case, my incredulous American: There was a brilliant aviator in the First World War, Legion of Honor, Military Medal, twenty-odd palms and a dozen stars on the ribbon of his War Cross. Fame cracked his mind, or battle fatigue, as you might say, he became a homicidal maniac. He was one of the idols of French boys. So he died officially, in a crash in 1919. He's a vigorous man of fifty-five physically, very much alive, only, from time to time, he has to be put in a straitjacket.

"Originally, that's how Nordstrom got his pull, his Sana was used by the people in power. Thus, the Health Service, the Attorney of the Republic, consequently all the inspectors, policemen, gendarmes, town and village officials, handled anything connected with the place very gingerly. For instance, his reports, the lists of his patients, of his employees, were not too carefully combed for mistakes.

"When the German Army reached here, early in June 1940, a detachment of armored vehicles and some troop-lorries rolled

through Forlagne and up this mountain, mopping up French stragglers. But when they reached the fence up above, there was a white flag and a big poster in German—and they stopped. From the very first, the Germans seemed to consider the Sana as a neutral enclave in our region. Within a week, they had their own military doctors up there, they had barracks built, but they never interfered with the main buildings. It is quite possible that some of the patients called for special consideration from German soldiers, even under the Nazis.

"Nordstrom was a Vichy-ite and a collaborationist from the beginning. I knew that, but as he had served in our Army, and was naturalized, he might help in safe ways. For instance, he had various privileges, priorities on certain regional farm products, trucks rolled up with meat and fine wines. He also had medical supplies, and nobody questioned anything he did. I approached him very diplomatically, you can be sure, merely hinted. He rebuffed me, which was perhaps his right, but he also denounced me to the German cops, which was a dirty trick.

"After the Boches beat it and the housecleaning started, I reported the whole incident to the authorities, with affidavits from people who knew. Nordstrom was called in, questioned and released. I understand that he pointed out that he was not an independent agent but the director of an establishment devoted to healing, and that the interest of his patients had come first. That's a point, of course."

"You think that Nordstrom knows too much about too many people to be bothered?"

"Exactly."

"And that there is nothing to be done?"

"As matters stand, no. Nothing can be done through the authorities, the police. But I may try something that they haven't thought of." Doctor Sezille started the motor, switched on the headlights, and started chugging up the mountain road, turn after turn. The lights in the valley seemed like yellowish reflections of the diamond stars. "Our biggest obstacle, old man, is something called Article 378 of the Penal Code."

"Really," Bruce nodded, sucked at his cigarette.

"Covers professional secrecy. Anyone revealing publicly the name of a patient, his presence in a sanatorium, his health condition, nature of disease, anything almost, is liable to a very heavy fine and up to six months in the jug. Health and police employees cannot communicate a list of patients or employees to anyone outside unless they are ordered to do so by a judge. To fine and jail is added dismissal, in their case.

"And the judge cannot release them from secrecy unless it has been demonstrated legally that their testimony is needed to safeguard public interest and serve justice. Even the police cannot penetrate further than the office unless they are requested to do it by the director in charge or are provided with direct orders from the Republic's Attorney and a special warrant. There is a wall of silence erected around this place, as effective, and even more effective, than that wire fence—"

THEY had halted before an iron gate in a wire fence. Beyond, against the starry sky, loomed tall firs. The headlights showed a large sign: *Private Property, Entry Forbidden.*

"You can see that part of the sign was painted out. It was in German. Ah, here is what I expected. Good evening, my friend."

A man had emerged into the light. He was tall, solid, clad in a dark, semi-military uniform. An automatic carbine, hung from his shoulder on a sling, rested on the palm of his right hand.

"What do you want?" he challenged abruptly.

"I'm Doctor Sezille. Could I see the Director?"

"If you'd been expected, I'd know. Make an appointment. I can't let you through."

"You might telephone and ask."

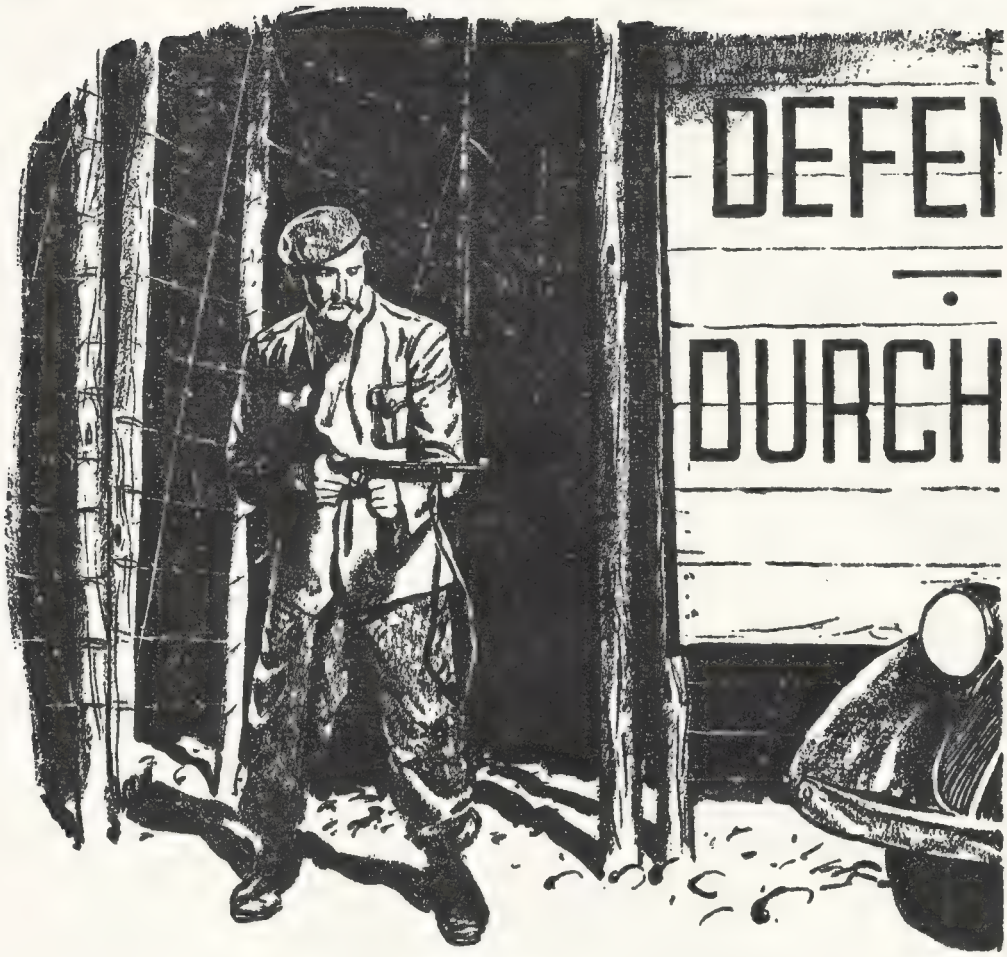
"There's no phone here."

"Thanks a lot. Good night." Sezille turned the car, rolled down hill. "Well, they watch the road, but don't keep a permanent sentry at this gate. That's one point. And there is no phone between this gate and the main building. Another point."

"Thinking of going in?" Bruce wondered.

"I may have to ask you to go in, old man."

"Me?"



A man in semi-military uniform emerged into the light. "What do you want?" he challenged abruptly.

"You. Don't worry, I'll get you a map. And Bejart will probably go with you."

"I doubt it, he's fed up."

"Bejart was born fed up. That never kept him from doing anything exciting. And it may mean a chance to kill Boches—he can't miss it any more than you can."

"Me?" Bruce repeated.

"You, old man. That kid, Colas, is an unconscious psychologist. He put that stuff about Boches running around here, and you started sniffing like an old dog dreaming of quails. Would you drop it now for one thousand dollars?"

"I suppose not." Bruce laughed. "Especially since they tried to scare me off. They may have murdered Albert, and I hate to think they could get away with anything like that."

"Avenging the orphan boy, what?"

"Nuts," Bruce replied.

"I like you, old man," Sezille resumed, with his eyes on the road, "but you're reticent about using the right words for things. For instance, you say you'll see it out because they tried to scare you. You don't like me to say you want to find out what happened to Albert because he was an orphan.

"You'd be ashamed to tell me that you're kind of sick of seeing what is going on, that if there is anything phony going

on you feel you have to mix in because it is just for you to do it, that it's a sort of tribute to all the good guys you knew who died, at the front, in the woods, in cells and cellars, to clean up the Boches. You feel that some people have the right to forget, but not you."

"Suppose that's true, it's the same for you, Doctor."

"Not quite." Sezille smiled quietly. "When I was arrested, they searched my home and took my wife to jail. They kept her five days. We had a child, a son, eleven months old. He was well when she went in, sick when she came back. He died. Might have died anyway, but it did something to her mind. The war had already hit her hard, she'd lost a brother.

"When I got out, after six months, she blamed me for having caused the baby's death, by bringing the Gestapo on us. Later, she told me that I was out too much. One had to get out to help the partisans—I know a lot of people claimed to have helped immensely without moving from their homes, but I don't see how. She left me, divorced me. She married again, a wine merchant from Macon. Because Nordstorm picked up a phone and told somebody I probably knew about British aviators. I have a personal interest in him. Well, here's the farm."

CHAPTER VI

RETURN MATCH

BRUCE accompanied Doctor Sezille and Nicolas to Aurebois that night. The official reason for taking the boy away was that pneumonia was to be feared. Nicolas submitted to his mother's kisses, shook the hands stretched to him, looked very doleful. Nevertheless, he was fast asleep on his stretcher before they left Forlagne behind, despite the bouncing of the old car.

"Listen to him," Sezille remarked. "In six weeks, he'll forget all about it. Another wonderful sensation of incredible luxury, trundling your patients openly." He chuckled. "I keep going back into the past, like a very old man, something about all this has turned the clock back. We handled quite a few of those very young British flyers, in 'Forty-two and -three mostly, nice boys, eighteen, nineteen, some even younger. The Boche night interceptors got some, but most of them cracked up on the ridges—not enough altitude, tricky flying at night.

"But that's over with. Though some of them broke your heart—trying to tell you in their school French not to take chances, to dump them on the road if the Germans showed up. Imagine that, dumped out of the clouds, in the darkness, on foreign soil, often grievously hurt, and worrying about us. When their Churchills and others play their tricks, I think of them and it takes the bad taste away.

"Oh, well. I wasn't fretting about their killing the boy now, you understand, because they must have realized he did all the talking that was in him. But they might have made an attempt to discredit him by planting evidence. You noticed that Mother Jeanne and a couple of maids started to churn up that room as soon as we left. I don't expect any trouble for you very soon—they'll check up on you in Paris."

"I'm in the clear," Bruce declared.

They rolled into silent Aurebois around midnight. The doctor had an old housekeeper, a dour, bony woman from Auvergne, who was, he said, more resolute than most men and she looked it. Without saying a word, she took charge of the sick boy, made up a bed for Bruce on the leather settee in the waiting-room of the office.

In the morning, Sezille took Bruce over to the Commissary of Police, introduced him to a number of officials. Then, while he made his first calls, he settled him in a cafe with a few men who seemed to have no work to do. Throughout the morning, other men drifted in and out, nodded greetings, shook hands. Several spoke to Bruce in English. They were the exiles of the long war, men who had trained either in Britain or in America, or had picked up the language in prison camps. Although few of them showed outward evidence of their tribulations, they all emanated a definite, feverish animation when they spoke of the old days.

"Curious lot, aren't they?" Sezille commented as he drove Bruce to the bus stop before the Hotel du Commerce, after an excellent lunch. "Wanted you to see them, the up-rooted. They gravitate together by instinct. Most of them have found jobs, picked up life here. Some will stand it a while, then leave again. It's more noticeable in a small city like this one. I had you meet them purposely. It makes all the difference, in an emergency, if you've known a guy, shaken his hand. For instance, the commissary met you, and when I stopped by again, I casually mentioned that the gendarmes had pestered you. He phoned the Gendarmerie and the Sub-Prefecture, and they told him nobody had mentioned you. So the cops from Forlagne lied, and Nordstrom hasn't mobilized anybody very important so far. Don't worry if I drop out of sight for a few days, you'll hear from me."

Bruce found everything calm at the Matignon farm.

But during the next couple of days, he discovered that the workmen were reserved with him, pointedly treated him like a summer vacationer, a visiting gentleman. His appearance in a field where the first manure was being spread, or in an orchard where the early fruit was picked, ended normal conversations. They knew who he was, often referred to Alain, but they sensed that Prosper was not too pleased to have him about. Prosper was not the actual owner, but he hired and fired.

Bejart was friendly and would on occasion stop and spin a yarn about his activities during the Occupation. But Bejar

was a busy man. He was a sort of local sorcerer, but only a small fraction of his work was occult. He was called to give advice on livestock, crops, planting. Then he had to fill orders from the neighboring inns for game and fish. In the early morning, at high noon, at dusk, at night, his lanky silhouette, bent over his old bike, could be discerned scuttling along roads and lanes.

Gendarmes and constables, guards and wardens, seemed blind where Bejart was concerned. He was needed and accepted. This only seemed phenomenal to Bruce until he recalled a figure of American life of a few years before, the bootlegger. While the man who supplies necessities is taken for granted, the one who provides illegal luxuries is protected.

The small children around the farm, and there were a number, were fond of Bruce, but he liked to escape from them at times, from their prodigious activity and endless questions.

His favorite spot became the brook, where it spread into a small natural basin, eight feet deep in the middle. There was not enough space for a swim, but the water jetted from the mountain four or five degrees about centigrade zero, and after a dip of a few minutes, he could stretch out in the sun on a blanket, naked. The spot was more than a kilometer from the buildings, no one ever passed near. With a couple of books, magazines, a supply of cigarettes and a flask of cognac, one could while away very pleasant hours.

ON THE third afternoon after his trip to Aurebois, Bruce had dressed, packed up his stuff and was heading for home up a bushy slope when a man appeared suddenly, not ten feet from him. It was a second before he recognized Leonard, the chauffeur. He stopped and spoke.

"Hello."

Leonard did not answer. He was not in uniform. He wore trousers of coarse blue cloth, a green pullover sweater over a striped shirt, a battered hat and cord-soled sneakers. He threw his hat to the ground, and Bruce placed his bundle aside.

"So it's that way?" he said, brilliantly.

"Yes, it's that way," Leonard agreed.

He had picked a very nice spot for the meeting, grassy, free from large pebbles, very private, screened from view by the rising ground on one side, by a grove of trees on the other. No other words were exchanged, no conditions discussed. But from the fact that Leonard had showed himself and had not ambushed him, Bruce understood that the amenities would prevail.

It was not a pretty fight, but it was hearty enough. Bruce felt some resentment about the ridiculous failure of his combat trick. Whether an ex-professional or not, Leonard could move about very well. Bruce was not afraid of a few bruises, and he had recovered weight and strength. At first, they boxed, exchanging punches at long range. Before long, they grappled, and in close, in the heat of the action, elbows snapped high and knees popped up. Leonard strove savagely to get Bruce's head in chancery, to pummel him at will.

They fell several times, rolling over and over. There were gasping pauses, during which they breathed, glared and sneered. Those pauses grew longer, and before very many minutes, it was evident that Bruce moved forward to resume, first. Then Leonard started to retreat before him, fell whenever he was hit, fumbled about, peered sideways before one eye was shut. This was the cream of the encounter for Bruce, save that he grew irritated with himself because he was so arm-weary that even carefully aimed punches did not knock his adversary senseless.

It ended when Leonard's knees buckled, he fell, rolled on his side, could not get up.

"*Ça ira comme ça?*" Bruce asked. "Will that do?"

"*Ça va,*" Leonard grunted.

"I'm going down and wash up. You'd better come, it will do you good."

Back at the pool, he stripped again and dove in, wallowed in the cold liquid. Inside five minutes, Leonard joined him. His face was badly battered and there were welts and bruises on his body. Yet he looked at Bruce and laughed.

"Well, you stopped a few, at that." He shook his head and spoke between chattering teeth. "I wouldn't have believed you could do it."

"Well, I'm not a kid, like Albert."

"I'm getting out, this cold's killing me." Leonard clambered out, Bruce joined him and found his bottle. "What's that you're drinking?"

"Cognac. Want some?"

"You're talking." Leonard took a mouthful, rolled it around his mouth before swallowing. Then he drank more. "Thanks a lot. Well, that's that. I lose my job and take a licking. This is my lucky week."

"Lost your job?"

"The boss got another guy to drive him, says he can't trust me." Leonard shrugged. "I hope the new guy runs into you. Thanks, I will." He took a cigarette from the pack extended toward him. "Good smoke. Yes, got demoted to utility chauffeur again. Twenty percent cut in wages."

"Why don't you quit?"

"Quit? Listen, twenty percent cut is still better than anywhere else. Then—I have my own reasons to stick, even if—"

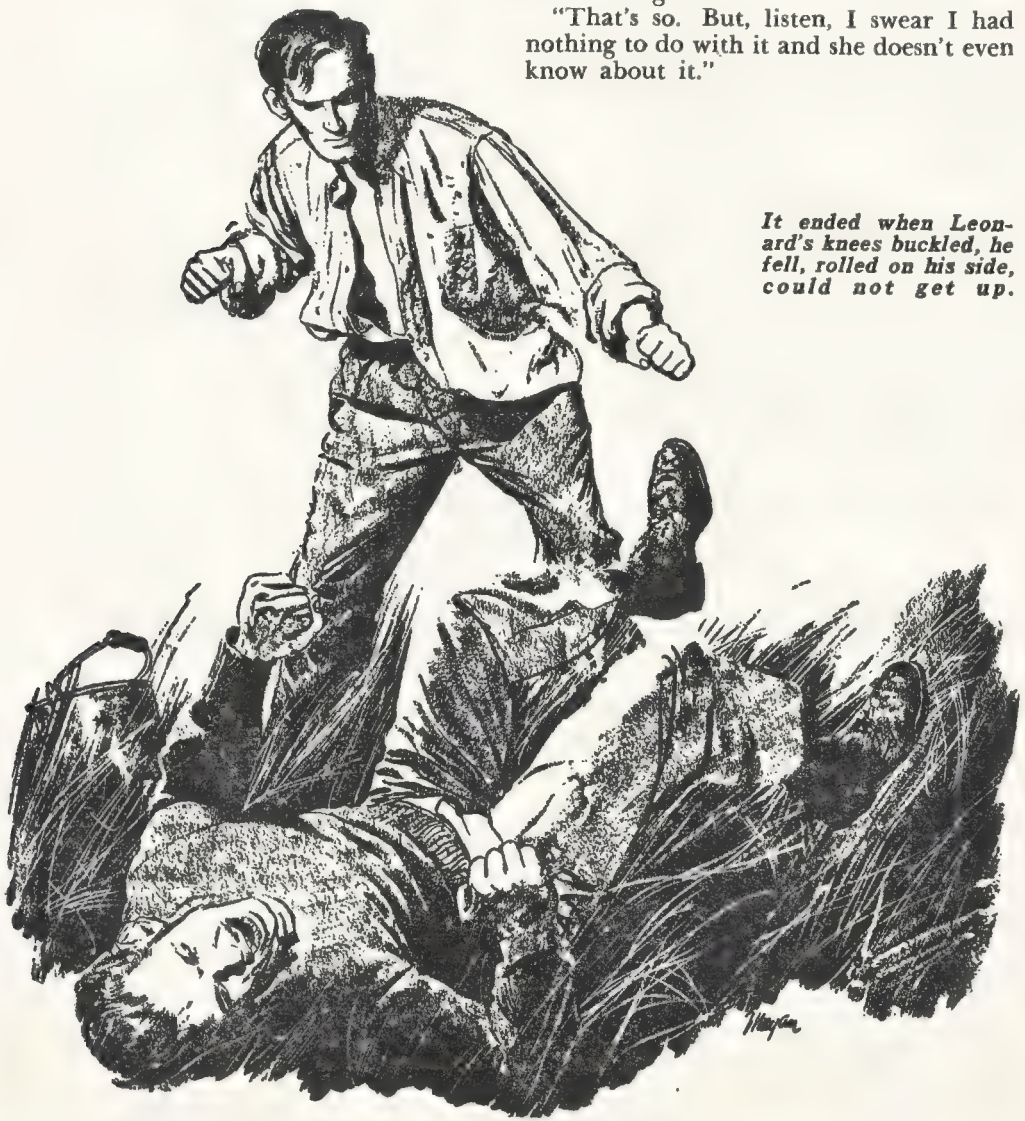
"Even if they'd let you quit, eh?" Bruce paused a second, then added, "Your other reason wouldn't call herself Margot?"

Leonard started, seemed about to resume the fight.

"Where the devil did you get that name?"

"Look, if I know about Albert, I know about Margot."

"That's so. But, listen, I swear I had nothing to do with it and she doesn't even know about it."



It ended when Leonard's knees buckled, he fell, rolled on his side, could not get up.

"You smacked him, didn't you?"

"Oh, that, sure." Leonard contemplated his cigarette tip. "What could I do? The boss knew nothing about the business then and the guy starts shouting her name. But I wasn't even on duty that night."

"What night?" Bruce prompted.

"Eh?" Leonard started, shook his head. "I'm mixed up. You haven't a light hand, you know, my head's ringing like a gong. Look, thanks a lot for the stuff. And don't tell anybody about my being here—we're not supposed to go outside, you probably know that. I'd be docked a month's wages and my next town leave would pop."

He was dressing hurriedly.

"Why did they kill the kid?" Bruce asked suddenly.

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"Don't you?" Bruce caught his arm as he started away. "Look, you're regular, you could have laid for me with a club or a stone, and I know it—"

"Didn't think I'd need anything," Leonard grumbled.

"Why not say something? You know, when the lid blows off, you won't be sitting so pretty, old man."

"No lid's blowing off." Leonard started to walk away, turned back a few steps. "Look, maybe I should tip you off. Go away, don't stick your nose into anything. It's bad business and a lot tougher than you'd figure. Better beat it before they find out you're asking questions. You're all right for a few days, maybe four, a week, but he never forgets anything and when he gets around to you, he'll do something."

"Who? Nordstrom?"

"Who else? And when he gets busy, you won't mean no more to him than a belch. So long."

CHAPTER VII

A DEATH AT THE SANA

BEJART was sent for by Mother Jeanne and attended to Bruce's bruises and cuts with salves and methods of his own. He even produced a little kit containing creams and paint to disguise surface injuries.

"Doctor Sezille got me that," he said, proudly. "Came in handy at times. So it was Leonard who lost? Don't worry, I won't tell anyone. Eh, he must have pride."

"He seems like a pretty good guy."

"They're all good guys, in their way. I mean the fellows up there. They've got good jobs and want to hold them. Funny what people will do about jobs—losing a good job seems to scare them worse than losing their life! You remember the jeweler in Paris, what was his name, Mestorino? He murdered a salesman for robbery. Well, his secretary, one of his workmen, a guy from the shop, all saw the body, it turned out. And when it came out and they were asked why they hadn't talked to the cops before, they said they hadn't been sure the man wasn't asleep or drunk—on the floor of an office, mind—and they were afraid of losing their jobs.

"Hold your head around this way, to the light—it'll smart, but don't worry. Now, you take the Boches, regular skunks, most of them, but once in a while you'd come across one with some pity in him. But that didn't mean when you had to do him in you worried about him. The good pay for the bad, always."

"I think if we could get a hold of Leonard, somewhere, and talk to him a while, friendly like, he'd help us out," Bruce suggested.

"Maybe. But how are you going to see him privately?"

"I did today."

"He looked for you. You're not hard to find, he is."

"If we could tell him we'd help him get the girl out—"

"And give him an income for life," Bejart filled in skeptically. "You'd see him try to drive a bargain. Nope, Bruce, let the doctor handle the brain work. He's had experience. You're too young."

Bruce would have liked to tell him that two years before he had been considered old enough to be sent on difficult, dangerous missions. But he already knew the clannishness and conceit of the veterans of the Resistance. Privately, he decided that he would make an attempt to find out things for himself, to work on his own, through Leonard. Leonard was a simple fellow, who admired anyone who could beat him physically.

Meanwhile, he continued with the routine existence of the farm. He played cards with Prosper, Bastien and Bejart for two hours every evening, after supper. Mother Jeanne sat by the table, knitting or sewing, joining in the conversation once in a while. If Bejart had to go out, she took a hand, and was not a poor player.

He was surprised to find himself playing cards against Prosper as if his life depended on winning. The big farmer also felt a keen rivalry. And, very oddly, Bruce was beginning to like Prosper. To start with, there were moments when he seemed very much like Alain, a trick of peeping at his cards, a lift of the shoulder when he was annoyed or amused. He was larger, older, coarser, but something of his young brother showed through. Also, Prosper was sordid, but in a sort of honest fashion, without hypocrisy. His love for a franc, for a centime, he admitted and thought natural, legitimate.

Bruce no longer had bad dreams during the night, but his perturbation seemed to wait at the foot of the bed to pounce on him as he awoke. He knew that something was going on, that Nordstrom was up there, thinking. He took strolls as far as the barb-wire fence, and, every time, a guard appeared before very long, exchanged hellos, but would not enter into conversation. Bruce would have liked to see Leonard, but did not dare ask for him.

It was the postman who brought news of the next development. He had left some letters at the farm on his way up the mountain, and he stopped on the return trip to pick up outgoing mail, and to absorb a pint of wine. The postman was a stout, cheerful man of thirty-six, who'd served in the Zouaves and liked to talk about North Africa, where Bruce had landed in November 1942. According to his own tales, he had been a famous demolisher of bridges during the Occupation, but Bejart only laughed.

Bruce had answered two letters from friends, which he had ready. The postman accepted them, and chatted about the price of wine in Algeria, just a beautiful memory by now. He finished his wine, which cost him nothing, and moaned about the past.

"Got to be going, there's a train to make." He stretched, sighed. "And I got to stop at the Village Mairie, to pick up the official notification for the family." The postman saw Mother Jeanne's inquiring look and explained: "They had a death up there. So the certificate has to be sent and an inquiry about whether they want an autopsy. Sudden death, you understand."

"They should be used to that up there," the woman said dryly.

"Oh, this time it's an employee."

"Well, it's nobody we know—"

"Oh, sure, you do, Mother Jeanne. It was Leonard, the chauffeur. You must have seen him."

Bruce had a queer sensation then, as if everything around him had turned somehow soft and fleecy. He felt that he had expected the name.

"What did he die of?" he asked, and his voice sounded strained to himself.

"Pneumonia, it says on the certificate, but they had the city doctor come up, because they thought at first it was meningitis—or there was a chance it might be, and that's contagious and has to be reported. I know because the mayor asked me to get in the car with the doc when he passed through, to show him the road—new guy, just appointed—and one of the doctors from up there rode back as far as Forlagne with him because of the formalities. Papers have to be filled out for his family, insurance and stuff. The permit's granted, all right, but they're waiting for word from his people as to what to do with the body and whether they want an autopsy. It wasn't meningitis, they made tests in their laboratory—they've got a swell one up there, I hear—well, I got to be going."

BRUCE was left in a daze. He was almost physically sick. He remembered how the man's teeth had chattered as he stood in the cold water. And there must have been symptoms of a head injury. He had struck Leonard thirty or more times, knocked him down. The poor chap had been sweating when he plunged in. He had said that he was "mixed up," that his head rang, and Bruce had thought he was avoiding his questions!

No one that he knew had seen the fight. He had told Bejart, but the man could keep silent. However, everyone at the table had noticed his face that evening and his explanation that he had slipped and

struck a boulder had been received with polite amusement. Bastien, among others, had looked at his knuckles and winked. If the family asked for an autopsy, and Leonard had suffered either a fracture or a concussion, he was in hot water.

French juries were as odd in their reactions as good American juries. French judges sometimes were not partial to foreigners. Throughout France there was the inevitable reaction against men who had been hailed as crusaders, saviors and who had turned out to be merely human beings with the normal human proportion of criminals, bandits and crooks. Some papers were filled with items concerning the misbehavior of American GI's in Paris. It was propaganda, but propaganda unfortunately based on facts. Majors shipped home money for black market rings, a colonel swiped crown jewels in Germany—

After an hour of brooding and nervous pacing, he borrowed Nicolas' bicycle and wheeled down to Forlagne. He went to the post office and asked to be connected with Doctor Sezille. The housekeeper answered, told him that her master was at the hospital. He telephoned the hospital. The calls went through at the French pace for communications by wire, he had to hold the line for long minutes.

"Allo, allo—"

"This is Bruce telephoning from Forlagne, Doctor."

"Anything new?"

"Yes. Seems important enough."

"It would be almost impossible for me to come. Can you?"

"Sure, but there is no bus until six."

"I won't be through until seven, we only lose a half hour." Sezille's voice was calm. "I wouldn't hire a car unless it's absolutely necessary. Needless expense. See you soon."

He was right, Bruce thought—hiring a car would attract attention. And he must inform Mother Jeanne that he would not be in that night. There was no time to go back. A young boy from the farm passed by the cafe terrace on which Bruce had camped. He called him and wrote a note.

"Going to be away long, Monsieur Bruce?"

"I don't know, I don't think so. I mean, no, I'll be back tomorrow, of course."

The trip down to Aurebois on the bus was a torture. Bruce was recognized as the Matignon's American guest by an old woman in the seat behind, and she breathed reminiscences of Alain as a small boy—and a fetid odor into his face—for the entire journey. Other people from the vicinity took part in the conversation before five minutes had passed and his journey was as public as if he had hired a band.

At Sezille's apartment, he found the housekeeper still alone. She informed him that Nicolas had been transferred to the hospital. Nothing serious, just feverish. She took one look at him and brought a decanter of cognac. The level was considerably lower when Sezille hurried in.

"What happened?" he asked.

"Look here, Doctor, don't misunderstand me. But I can't stay on. It's important that I leave. It's a silly affair, I'm in no way to blame, but—"

"Suppose you tell me what it's all about? How have they managed to scare you off?"

"They're not doing it—I'm not scared."

He told the story to Sezille, who nodded from time to time.

"And you want to go away?"

"Look, Doctor, it isn't murder or anything like it. Not even manslaughter. I couldn't be extradited, if I was tried at all, I'd be tried at home. To be frank, I am afraid of a French jury."

"I don't blame you. It's worse gambling than roulette. Just a moment—" Sezille took the telephone, called a number. "Marcel? Our friend is here. Could you come around with the usual lot? Nine will be fine, yes." He hung up and shouted, "Augustine, what do we get for dinner?"

"Sorrel soup, beef bourguignonne, apricot tart—but if Monsieur stays, I'll fry chicken, too."

"Monsieur stays. Get a couple of bottles of Moulin à Vent up here, he needs cheering up." Doctor Sezille seemed in excellent humor. "See here, Bruce, this is just what I expected. After that, try and tell me that Nordstrom isn't clever. He has you quitting cold."

"You mean that Leonard isn't dead?"

"I suppose he is dead, all right."

"Then what?"

"I'll explain everything when the others are here. Will you believe me? I guarantee that you will not be arrested, let alone tried. You'll be in far more danger if you sulk Augustine's dinner—she's a wonderful cook and sensitive about it."

IT WAS an excellent dinner, just like old times, as Sezille expressed it. When the Vieille Cure and a local marc with its own distinction were placed on the table, Bruce felt very much better. The dining room, with its tall, old-fashioned windows, shiny walnut furniture, seemed very safe and restful. A small porcelain clock on the mantel ticked melodiously. At nine, four men arrived, four inconspicuous Frenchmen. They shook hands affably, exchanged banter with Augustine. The only odd feature of the gathering was that they obviously belonged to different trades, if not classes. Choris was evidently prosperous, Brenay as evidently poor. Carmelin was a mechanic or a metal worker of some kind and Beldon, from his black jacket and gray trousers, would be a salesman in a department store.

After the first ceremonial chitchat, Sezille started to talk, then, smiling, he rose and pulled curtains over the windows, dark curtains, and closed the door into his office. "We'll be more comfortable the old way. We met here often enough, with much graver problems to handle. All we risk now is a summons or a civil suit for defamation of character. The Boches were tougher. Messieurs, our friend Kerrigan was interviewed by the Gestapo." He addressed Bruce. "All of us here were. But we got some of our own back. Carmelin, for instance, has quite a score to his credit."

"If I was an aviator," Carmelin said good humoredly, "I'd have my photo in *L'Illustration*."

"He specialized. He buried them."

"Just finding them wasn't as tough for the rest as their just vanishing. But the doctor here claims you've found some more?"

"We hope we have," Sezille corrected. "By the way, how is it going, Beldon?"

"Well, we've got the lists you wanted, as you know. No trouble. I used the album, see. My wife has typed and mailed the letters. We should start getting answers tomorrow or the day after."

"We're tracing the employees and patients up there," Sezille explained to Bruce. "You know, we had people everywhere in France, and they're glad to do a little of the old stuff again. If there is anything phony, this should bring it out. Now, here is what was pulled on our young friend—" Sezille related the story told him by Bruce. "Of course, we know it's a put-up job to worry him into leaving."

Choris smiled under his big mustache. "Naturally."

"Yet you admit Leonard's probably dead," Bruce protested.

"I think he is. He has to be, to make it good. In my opinion, here is what happened: Leonard has been under suspicion for a while—when that young guy, Albert, was either killed or locked up—and they don't bother feeding people of no use to them—the chauffeur was probably questioned, because Nordstrom would remember his row with Albert at the garage in Forlagne. A chap like Leonard isn't hard to break. They probably used the kindly way, all-of-us-make-mistakes stuff.

"He probably told them that he had warned the boy off one night. That's one break of their rules. They demoted him, and watched him. See, they knew he was in love, and a guy in love does crazy things. Like trying to lick a guy who licked him, because his girl has heard about it. Right so far?

"He gets out on his own hook to get even with Bruce here. Or maybe somebody teases him into thinking he has to do it to keep his self-respect. He gets a good hiding. Take a look at our American—and it was several days ago, and he won. Leonard's marks must have been noticed. Maybe he'd caught a chill, maybe not. In either case, he can be ordered to bed, for treatment. And he croaks, of course."

"You mean they'd kill a man just to have something to scare me off with?"

"If I didn't know better," Sezille said, rather impatiently, "I'd ask you where you had spent the past seven or eight years! When recovery of the gold in executed people's teeth was carried to industrial scale, you wonder if one man would be killed. You forget that the principle is the same, whether a man kills for a throne or a forty *sous* bill.

"You say you noticed that Leonard was fed up, tempted to quit, to talk. Do you think nobody else can observe?"

"It would have been just as easy to do me in."

"And there, all by yourself, you've put your finger on the solution. Of all of

us, you are the safest from them. Why? Because you are an American, a former officer in good standing, with many friends and acquaintances in Paris. Nordstrom and his people don't know how to reach Americans and cover up, not because Americans can't be reached and fixed, but because they've never needed to and have no contact ready.

"Suppose you are killed, or you disappear? How long would it be before your Embassy approached the Ministry of the Interior, of Justice, for an investigation? And that's a little high to reach with bribes or influence. It can be done, I suppose, but it's difficult and expensive. And they worry that you may have connection with the diplomatic corps. That happens, you know. American influence, for instance, got Legionnaire Doty out of a twenty years' sentence.

"Also, there are many American reporters still in France, covering the conferences. If your death or disappearance came during a dull period, how many of them would come snooping around—if only for the sake of the trip on expenses and a change of air?

"I had you meet the Commissary of Police, remember? And I casually mentioned that you had been annoyed by the gendarmes and had written to your friends at the Embassy about it."

"What friends? I do know—"

"What matters? I told him you were a cousin of Secretary Byrnes' wife, and it would take six weeks to find out the truth on that. By this time, they're actually afraid you'll have an accident. Because they have something to hide up there, something worth a few human lives to them, any lives except their own. So they wanted to get you out without harming you."

Bruce smiled skeptically. "I learned this afternoon, quite by accident, about Leonard's death."

The others laughed softly and exchanged glances.

"By accident! The postman told you—most rural postmen are gossip carriers."

"How could they manage things so he'd find out about—"

"You'd drown in a tea cup, old chap! Choris, you know the fellow sent up by the Procurator's Bureau—what's his name?"

"Doctor Demievres. A fatuous fool."

"Right. Now, all the Sana people had to do was to phone the mayor's office that the medical examiner was coming and to have the postman show him the way. It becomes more obvious when you think that after leaving the crossroads at Forlagne, there is no way to go anywhere but to the Sana. Then one of them rides back with them as far as the village. Why—if not to be overheard talking about the case? It was a certainty that the postman would gab and that somebody would repeat it to you inside forty-eight hours.

"Nordstrom only saw you a few minutes, but he read you very well. An honest man cannot always tell a crook, but most crooks can tell an honest man. By an honest man I mean one with a normal sense of embarrassment and shame, afraid of legal entanglements, courts. There will be no trouble for you."

"Why not?" Bruce wondered. "They have something. I hit—"

"Because your arrest would bring about just what they're doing all this to escape—an official investigation. Police and reporters at the Sana."

"Suppose Leonard's family asks for an autopsy?"

"They won't. With the official communication from the medical examiner, the family will receive a letter from the Sana. It will explain that the matter is routine, not because of any suspicion. That in case of an autopsy and investigation, payment on the insurance would be held up and perhaps ultimately denied if Leonard was proved to have been injured off their premises. They'll say, too, that additional charges will be deducted from the wages due him. By the way, Beldon, we must find the address of that family and check up. Someone can talk to them and find out if he mentioned the girl, so we can be sure which of the three Marguerites up there is our little Margot."

"Her age is an indication—"

"Women lie about their age. And we don't want news that we are probing in that direction to reach the Sana—pneumonia is easily contracted up there, it seems, and we don't want her snuffed out before we can use her . . . Bruce, I hope you're reassured about yourself?"

"Somewhat, Doctor." Bruce smiled. "Pretty smart deductions."

"No, just experience." The young doctor nevertheless seemed pleased. "You know, old man, the Gestapo had a bribe budget for Aurebois alone of more than a million francs a month. We had to cope with that. The proof that we outsmarted them is that we are still alive. Nordstrom would not exist against us if we had not gone soft and legitimate, if we didn't try to do things legally. Where we can, we do. Where we can't, we have other means. Let me show you the Album—"

He left the room for several minutes, returned with a large leather-covered album. "Here is one of our valuable tools."

WHILE the others watched him with pride, Bruce opened the book at random. The page was filled with small photographs, most of them dim and blurred. The scene was the same, a small door in a masonry wall, but the people were different in each. There were notes in some sort of code, names and numbers which were evidently dates. Such as: *Varnoux 16.15-5-11-43*. On other pages were rows of faces, clearer, larger pictures, many of them the usual passport or identity-car photos.

"Brenay, over there, took most of the snaps. He's a good photographer, but he was working under difficulties. That door is the back door of the Gestapo Bureau and he had to snap on the move, with a concealed camera, so you can forgive him light, focus and so on. To us, that writing conveys that the wife of a certain man —you see her in the picture, peering around—went on an errand of some sort to the Boches, at four-fifteen, November fifth, 1943.

"Here is a beauty of a rural scene, taken from behind bushes by a kid of fourteen, with an old box camera. You see six men crossing a field toward a barn. Five are Boches, with tommy-guns, as you can see, the sixth is a Frenchman. They found one of our wounded we had hidden there. He died. Of course, we attended to the slob soon after. But his family wants to keep it quiet. Here is an interesting cafe scene, one of our notorious eaters-of-Boches with his wife and his daughter and two German officers." Sezille turned a number of pages. "Here is Nordstrom on a station platform, greeting some Boches. Use this—" He handed Bruce a lens. "The grain's not very close, but you can recognize him."

"That's true."

"Hat in hand and smiling. Brenay got that one, too. He's a printer by trade, but he likes to take difficult pictures. So we put him in charge of photography for our group."

"No assignment too difficult, satisfaction guaranteed," said the shabby little fellow.

"You'll see him at work," Sezille went on.

"I will? When?"

"The next time they hold a party up there. It will be up to you and Bejart to get him within range. Shouldn't be too hard getting in at night. Getting out will be another problem."

Bruce's stomach tensed, he felt a surge of an increasingly familiar sensation. It was not precisely fear, it was a feeling of unreality, of dreamlike perturbation. The others watched him.

"As you wish." He licked his lips, forced a laugh. "But they probably won't hold one now that they're worried about us. They must have connected me with you, Doctor—we rode up to the gate together."

"On purpose, to worry them. The more jittery they get, the better."

"But will they hold a shindig now?"

"Those things must be arranged long in advance. You've only been here a week, the boy got shot the evening you arrived. If there is a cancellation, nothing will happen. We have asked some friends in Paris to look up train reservations for entertainers coming this way, the agencies always get them a few days ahead." Sezille opened a drawer, brought out a sheaf of paper. "Here are maps, brought up to date from old ones. You might like to see what the place looks like—here's a photo, from an old prospectus."

Bruce looked at the Sana for the first time. It was an Eighteenth Century structure, a large château, with a long façade pierced by two rows of very tall, narrow windows, the upper one opening on a stone balcony. There were several mansard windows. And there were two round, squat towers at the angles. There was a monumental stoop with broad, gracefully curving steps, a magnificent lawn, tall trees. There was no sign visible, nothing

to indicate that it was not a luxurious private residence.

"That's the official establishment," Sezille went on. "What we are interested in is the bungalow colony, down the hill, where the German aviators were put. Here is a sketch of the lay-out. The bungalows form a sort of square around a Bavarian-style rustic garden, in the center of a grove of firs. The soirées are held in this pavilion, or big kiosk, during the summer."

"If Brenay is to take the picture and Bejart is the guide—"

"Where do you come in, eh? You're our insurance in case something slips and they catch you. I think they'll hesitate to harm you—unless they realize that the game is up in any case. Then—it might end badly for you, very badly."

CHAPTER VIII

NIGHTMARE

NOTHING seemed changed at the Matignon farm. Mother Jeanne asked first about Nicolas, whom she had not seen since Sunday. Bruce told her he had seen the boy that evening, that he was getting along very well and might be back on his feet in another couple of weeks.

"Prosper thought you wouldn't be back," she then said casually.

"What gave him that idea?"

"I couldn't tell you."

"Another war of nerves," Bruce thought, with amusement.

But the atmosphere was charged with excitement, and he realized that the war of nerves could be trying when he found himself quarreling with Prosper over the game of cards. Less than twenty cents American was involved, but for fifteen seconds he would have killed or died to prove his point. Prosper, urged by the other players, admitted he was wrong. But back in his room, Bruce trembled with anger when he recalled how close he had been to saying or doing something that would have made his longer sojourn impossible.

"Almost got me, he did." Then he thought. "Yet why the hell should I stay? I'm probably being played for a sucker by Sezille and his friends, too."

This really was none of his business. He had made a kid a foolish promise, that was true. But was keeping it worth physical injury, or jeopardizing his liberty?

Sezille had said that Bruce was safe, that he was so safe he could be used as insurance for others. But he had admitted he might be mistaken, and perhaps was not telling the whole truth. Bruce had sensed that Sezille and the members of the council of war, the staff, gathered in that dining-room, were very tough men. They had risked their lives, their freedom, for four years against as ruthless an organization as the world had known. In many cases they had sacrificed, and in all cases had been ready to sacrifice, their parents, their wives, their children, their friends. The official war was over, but its cessation had brought them new griefs, new rancor. They had seen the guilty forgiven, they had seen the heroes forgotten. They had vengeance in their souls—and would they hesitate to sacrifice him in pursuing it?

Didn't Doctor Sezille and his friends want an investigation of the Sana quite as much as Nordstrom wanted to avoid it? And if they compelled Nordstrom to kill Bruce, wouldn't that serve the purpose wonderfully well?

The following few days were restless. Bruce would swear at himself for being soft, foolish, for worrying. He had faced death many times. And he discovered that he was afraid of something much less final than death—because, as Sezille had said, he was an honest man. He feared arrest and appearance in a civil court. He was as tortured by doubt, fears, conscience, as the hero of a Russian novel.

Nobody mentioned Leonard or his death to him. When Flutet and his gendarme dropped in they were polite. But Bruce's mind kept returning to the fight near the pool, to Leonard's gesture as he held his head. Under oath, could he swear that he had not caused his injuries?

No proof that he had struck the blow? That was nonsense, he reasoned. There were people working on the mountain side, in the fields, in orchards, mending fences, guarding cows. Some of them had certainly seen Leonard walking down across the pastures. Somebody must have seen him heading for the pool. Some of them must have seen him walking up

again, must have seen his battered face. And everybody knew that the same day Bruce had returned from the pool with lacerations on his face and scraped knuckles.

He developed a belief that he was hunted, he suspected strangers—for a while he was certain that a mechanic who had come to repair the thresher was really a detective because the man had shown some interest in him.

Physically, he had never felt better. He ate as much as most of the hands, who had tremendous appetites, he walked and climbed, biked to the village and back. His vision was clear, his hands as steady as stone. But before he fell asleep, each night, he churned uneasy thoughts and emotions.

Were Bejart and Brenay to take him up there and abandon him?

If they did, what would be his lot?

He remembered Nicolas' story, the discussion among the guards that ended in the decision to shoot him. And what about Albert? Had they killed him? Or was he this moment in Paris, trying to break into the movies? Would a postal card come some fine morning and make the whole business a huge joke? It was possible that Nicolas had been hit by a random shot, while trespassing, and had made up the rest of his story to bolster his original yarn about Albert.

But Nordstrom had come after him, with Leonard. That was not imagination. But the Director might have been telling the truth, might merely have acted on Prosper's statement that his younger brother was ill. He would have persisted because of meeting with opposition. Considered coldly, Bruce thought at times, the whole business smacked of the fantastic, the isolated castle, for instance—reminiscent of Blue Beard. But Blue Beard had existed, damn it all—Gilles Something-or-other, and much worse than the guy in the fable!

Nordstrom, Nordstrom, when you rolled that name on your tongue, it grew funny and phony. And the man himself assumed some of the weird characteristics of scientists created by Wells, or of Maurice Renard's Doctor Lerne. But there was that doctor in Paris, who had chopped up and burned fifty people—he was real enough to be tried and sentenced!

And when it came to names, what could be funnier and phonier than Adolf Shicklgruber? Sounded like a burlesque comedian. But what that guy had done to the world was not the least bit comic, was it? Scientists not imagined by Wells had contrived a gadget that turned a whole city to rubble in a split second.

THIS was not Bruce's first experience with that baffling feeling of living in a nightmare. He remembered the night when he had been waiting for the signal to jump out of the plane flying over Burgundy. He had remembered his first stay in that region—he had not been picked at random—when he had been nine. He had thought then how crazy it would have seemed to the little boy he had been, if he had been told that less than twenty years in the future he would have to jump from an American military machine, equipped with deadly weapons, carrying forged papers, to join the inhabitants in a war against German soldiers. He had half-thought that as he jumped he would awake, nine years old—and he had jumped, and he had landed, and it had not been a dream.

It would be very much the same thing this time. Bejart would come and tell him, "It's for tonight." And he knew that he would not protest but would follow the poacher-sorcerer-healer through the darkness. Against what? Against whom?

But it was not Bejart who brought him the order. Doctor Sezille came in person. He drove up from Forlagne on his visiting day at the village. He examined Bruce, and said he was in fine shape.

"I feel pretty jittery," Bruce told him, rather sharply.

"Of course, but under the circumstances it's normal for you to be nervous. You'll see, this will prove to be just what you needed. Tapering off, you understand?" Sezille casually opened the door of Bruce's room, looked into the hall, returned. "It's for Saturday."

"You mean the—the expedition?"

"Yes, photographic reconnaissance." Sezille shrugged. "There is no other way. I've tried, very discreetly, to get action of some sort, but I ran into a stone wall. I got properly ticked off in a couple of places—I was told that the war is over and

that I am embittered, a trouble-monger. Brenay will give you the final instructions. I saw Bejart down below, and he says it won't be hard. You know, I think he's been in and out of that place before, but won't give. He's secretive, but then—his business is based on supposedly mystic knowledge."

"So's yours," Bruce snapped.

"I suppose to. But really, old man, I can't tell a patient I don't know what's the matter with him, can I? That kills trust. To be serious, Bejart says he can get you in and out. And they're having a spree Saturday."

"How do you know?"

"Routine work. An agency reserved tickets for seven girls to Dijon, next Friday. Six dancers and an accordionist. Our people there checked up and they aren't booked there or in any sub-prefecture or town. I had a hunch and had the garages checked, and sure enough, there's a big car hired to come up for the weekend."

"Thought the Sana always sent their own cars," Bruce said.

"I guessed they might not this time, because they probably fear we are keeping tabs on their cars. We are, as a matter of fact. They didn't want us to trace one to the station at Dijon, for fear we'd work back to the agency and question some of the dames who've been out. They didn't figure we had people who'd check from Paris."

"I have an idea—"

"To plant someone to drive the car? One of their own chaps will call for it." Sezille smoked in silence for a moment. "You know, I think Nordstrom is in a tight spot. Whoever he has up there that wants privacy must be paying high for it. Luxury hotel rates multiplied by ten. If he lets on that something is wrong, that people are nosing about, they may get nervous and leave. And if they leave in a panic, they may be picked up and questioned. So he has to keep them satisfied and unsuspicious."

"Who do you think he's hiding?"

"If we knew that, we'd know everything. Albert told Nicolas they were Germans. I hope so, because that would get Nordstrom into serious trouble. Very serious. But suppose he's got people the law is not interested in yet who, for one reason or another, don't want to be found—I could list a half-dozen reasons for you—I lose my certificate and go to jail, if I meddle.

"I got hold of some lists. No Germans. Didn't expect to find any. But a couple of Poles, several Swiss. There's one Hungarian, but as he has been there since 1929, he doesn't interest us. I haven't been able to check up on the patients much, so far, but there's an interesting development about the employees.

"Almost all the males hired after the Germans left were once connected with the Pétainist Militia. Several of them have spotty records as common law offenders. As a rule, sanatoriums are very fussy on that score. Leonard—he's from some small place out side Grenoble, by the way—was once involved with a ring of auto thieves, in 1934-35. Employing such people in such an establishment is a breach of the law, but a minor one.

"What's puzzling me most is that Prosper and the wealthy farmers around here, mayor included, appear to worry about you and me. Why? They're not pro-Germans, some of them helped us a lot, they hid our partisans, British flyers, fugitives from forced labor drafts to Germany. A couple even were on some raids.

"But they want us to leave the Sana alone. There's some reason. Profit isn't the reason, for if Nordstrom and his gang were cleaned out, somebody else would run the Sana and whoever had the place would buy local produce. They're afraid of Nordstrom, for some reason. They obey his orders. I have tried to open up some who are my patients, who carried guns, honest chaps, good Frenchmen. They sweat and they wiggle, but not a word will they speak.

"Now, I would like you to write a couple of letters—one to me, one to some trusted friend in Paris. In case they hold you, we can start things moving. Give them to Mother Jeanne to mail if you don't show up by noon on Saturday."

"She's going to Aurebois on Sunday, to see Nicolas, so—"

"She can [illegible] them in the box down there. Brenay will be back by then and can tell me what happened."

Bruce laid a hand on Sezille's shoulder. "*Brenay* will be back, eh—but I probably won't be? Why?"

"Because it's more important for him to

come back." Sezille did not flinch from Bruce's grip, did not try to shake him off. "And if he doesn't return Sunday morning, I'll know something went wrong." He paused, looked at the taller man with a faint smile. "You've been doing a lot of fretting, haven't you, old man? Now, let me tell you this. If I wanted you to be captured, I'd tell you so. And you'd do as I asked, because, inside, you know that if necessary I'd go up there and let them kill me.

"If you want to back out, pack your stuff and I'll drive you to a train tonight. You're under no compulsion except your own."

Bruce stepped back, sat down on the bed. They were silent for long seconds.

"You know I don't want to do that, Doctor."

"Then what do you want?"

"I don't quite know." Bruce shook his head in puzzlement. "I wish I'd never heard of this damn business."

"And I wish there'd never been a war." Sezille yielded to a sweeping gesture, his voice rose. "Do you think I liked any of it? Don't you understand that I'd give anything this moment to escape mixing in this, to be able to say, like most people are saying, 'It's over, let's forget it and go to work'?

"But it's like a dangling shred that must be snipped off. We're cursed, all of us who waged the war in the back corridors, in the sewers, because we suffered so much and we can't let go. We can't."

"All right, all right." Bruce nodded wearily.

CHAPTER IX

PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE

BRUCE awoke in the darkness. He felt a hand on his shoulder. And he recognized Bejart's calm voice. "Well, if anyone listened at your door, they can't think you're faking!"

Bruce sat up, swung his feet to the floor. The open window through which the poacher had entered so noiselessly formed a patch of paler black, studded with stars. The young man yawned and shivered, although the night was warm.

"I just stretched out for a few minutes, Bejart. Must have fallen asleep." He added ruefully, "I feel rotten."

Bejart moved about the room. He seemed to see in the dark, for he made no sounds. He pushed something round, smooth and cool into Bruce's hand. "Drink this. Won't hurt you. Then smoke a cigarette. Relax." As Bruce swallowed the four fingers of cognac in the tumbler, the man struck a match to light his pipe Bruce saw him grin. "Don't worry, if anyone is watching us, they won't need this light to spot us. Light up, now." He chuckled as he added, "A glass of rum, a cigarette? They always ask that when they wake up a guy for the guillotine."

"You have a gay streak, eh, Bejart?"

"Well, we're going to have a good time, you know. Don't worry, Prosper drank twice what you did, and you were out. The guys that went down to the village won't be back until four or five, and they won't be looking for you. Did you give Mother Jeanne those letters?"

"I did, yes."

"All right, we can start. Want a gun?"

"I'd like one, yes."

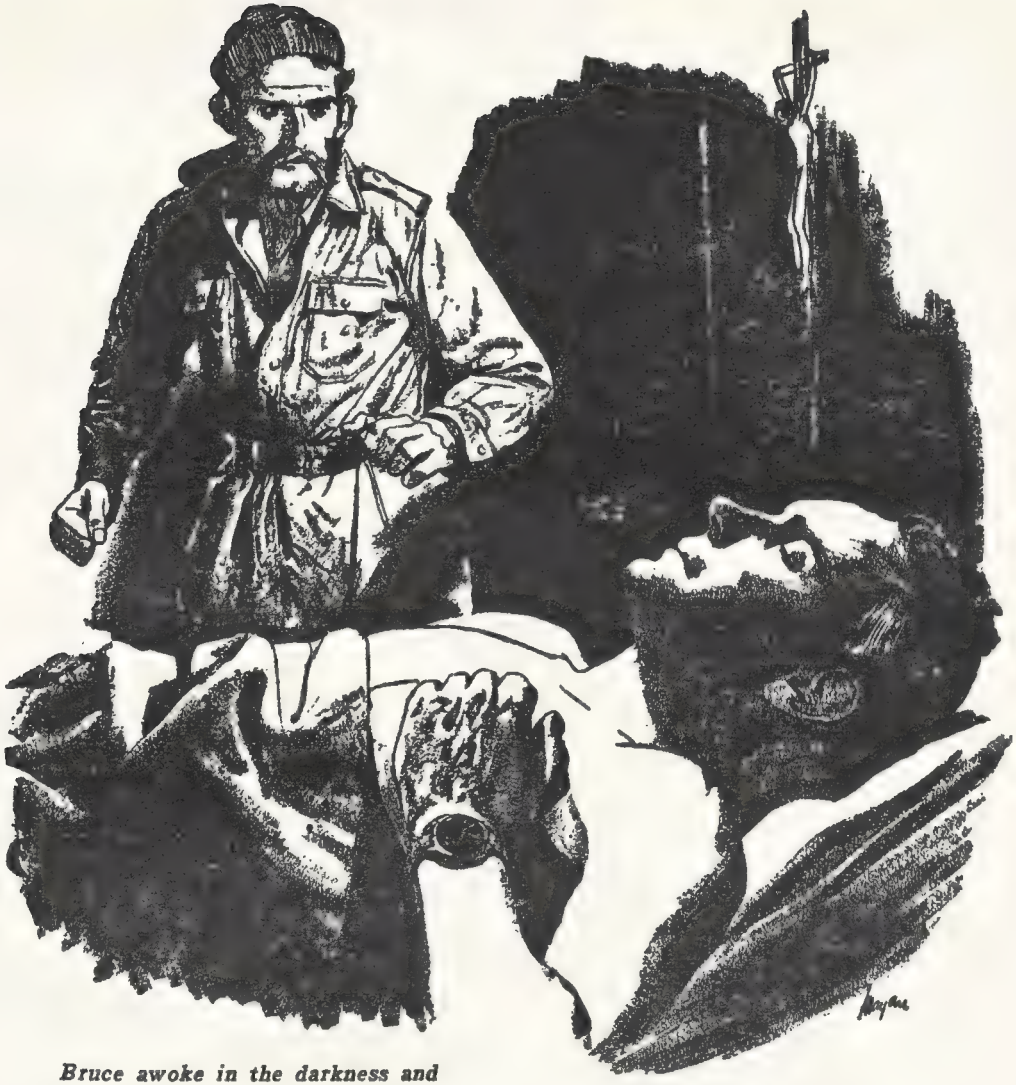
"Here—" Bejart placed a small automatic in his palm. "It's on safety, remember Cute little gadget, one of the English kids gave it to me. I want it back, souvenir. Don't lose it." He leaned out of the window, uttered a very low yet penetrating whistle, and the dog in the yard answered with a muffled growl. "All right, he knows who we are, he won't raise hell. You taped your ankles, like I told you?"

"Yes, yes."

"Brenay's up the slope a bit. Come on."

Bruce dropped the four feet to the ground. They crossed the yard and headed for the road. He looked back and the farm was a massive huddle against the night sky, completely dark. There was a streak of yellowish glow from the stables.

"One of the horses is sick and a guy's watching. But he's asleep." Bejart seemed to read Bruce's mind, answered his questions as they shaped. The two were on the road now, and followed it in silence for a couple of hundred meters before striking across a pasture. The little gun rubbed against Bruce's thigh in the trousers pocket, and he shifted it to the pocket in his shirt. It sagged the cloth annoyingly. "There's a loop on the holder, put your belt through it."



Bruce awoke in the darkness and recognized Bejart's calm voice.

"Should have thought of that."

"Maybe so. It's just that you're used to wearing clothes made special. You never carried a gun in civvies."

"No."

"That explains it." Bejart did not speak loudly, yet he did not whisper. He seemed perfectly at ease. Bruce had noticed this same economy of precautions, this same casualness, when on missions. He was annoyed to feel tense, to feel the muscles tight in his calves, an oppression in his chest. "Breathe deep a few times, right to the bottom, that helps. Don't worry, there'll be no trouble until we get on their premises, maybe not then."

"The dogs—"

"I'll take care of the dogs." Bejart touched his charge from time to time, or clucked his tongue, to change directions, to warn him of poor footing, a climb, a drop. Something crashed in the bushes, thumped-thumped away. "Damn fool hare. Lots of them up this way, regular preserve. There's Brenay now—"

Bruce peered through the darkness in the direction indicated. A cluster of tall trees were etched on the slope, deep-black

on grayish-black. He could see nothing moving, yet he suddenly smelled tobacco. A segment of black detached itself from a tree. "Hello."

"Hello," Bejart replied. Brenay reached for Bruce's hand, shook it, murmured a polite greeting. Then he started to tap something on his heel—he was emptying his pipe. He stepped on the ashes carefully.

"Wait until I get my gear," Brenay said. He moved in the darkness, handling several objects.

"Can I help you with something?" Bruce asked.

"No. I'll hand you yours later. Is it far?"

"No. Maybe an hour and a half."

"Oh, the devil. I am getting a blister. Oh, well."

"Getting soft," Bejart commented.

"Why not? It's been two years."

THE three resumed the march together. Yes, it had been two years, Bruce thought, since he himself had wandered through the night—not a hundred miles away. The two Frenchmen seemed to have a sense of proportion he lacked, for they didn't appear worried—after all, they were not dealing with the Gestapo backed by the German military system. Bruce wondered if the two had forgotten about Albert and Nicolas. On the easy stretches across fields or when they followed a stretch of the road or a pathway, Bejart chatted in the same soft monotone.

"You'll see, you'll split your sides laughing at how easy you get in. See, the guards on duty sneak toward the kiosk to peep at the people cutting up. Some of the help from the main buildings are around, too, even if they keep out of sight. And when the music's good and loud, you could sneeze and nobody would notice. They've got an electric box up there, wireless and phono, that Nordstrom paid more than one hundred and fifty thousand francs for. It's American, you know, wonderful, colored lights all over.

"But when entertainers come up, they have an orchestra. Five, six guys. They work at the place, valets, waiters, orderlies, and double as musicians. They sound all right to me, but some of the guests don't seem to like them much, and once in a while, one of them will go over, take an instrument and show them how it must be done. There's a piano, and a couple of fiddlers and a couple of horns or cornets."

"Dames good-looking?" Brenay asked.

"Good-looking? You're talking, they're good-looking! No heft, but what there is is all choice meat, first prize numbers at the country fair! Sometimes it's something to see. There was one once cut capers like a heifer with a wasp under her tail . . ." Bejart sought for words to express his admiration. "Well, out she'd run, straight up in the air she'd go, keeping her legs moving fast, then she'd kick her head, then she'd do the wheel. *Bon dieu,* but it was pretty to watch."

"You've been there often?" Bruce asked him.

"Six, seven times."

"You didn't tell Doctor Sezille, though?"

"No. To start with, I didn't know he was interested. We didn't see as much as each other, either, since the Boches left. Then, there's live and let live—the guards don't bother me even if they know I go over the fence after game when I need to. I'm known up there, too. Years ago, I found one of their nuts who'd strayed and just coaxed him back easy-like. Nordstrom gave me two hundred francs, which was like a thousand now.

"Sezille asked me a lot of questions lately. Now, me, I hold nothing for that Albert. He sneaked in to see the shows, and they didn't bother him, but he started prowling the main buildings."

"What about the Boches hiding there?"

"That, I wouldn't know. I never got close enough to hear just talk. Maybe you can tell a Boche by looking at him, when he wears a uniform. I think that some of the singing is in Boche, yes, but some is in English. But when he gave me orders to bring you up, I said all right—what the devil, he is the chief. But I'm only telling you about things up there because you'll be seeing for yourselves soon."

"Know what I think, Bejart?" Brenay said softly.

"For instance?"

"You're an old slob."

"A guy can't help growing old. You just sit around and it happens. If you say that because I like to look at the dames, well, there's a lot like me. And I don't

go paying money for it." He swerved to the right, called a halt in the middle of a ring of bushes. "We cross the fence fifteen, twenty yards up from here. Listen, you can hear music, kind of dim. Now, all right, it's easy and all that, but don't talk loud, and you, Brenay, lay off that pipe. The guards are dumb—but they're not dead."

"Carry on, Lynx-Eye," Brenay agreed.

"Told you three years ago not to call me that, Sparrow!"

"It's a compliment, but I apologize."

Bejart mumbled under his breath. He led the way to the fence, at a place where it stretched among trees, lifted one of the stakes from the ground. A section two meters in length swung like a gate. The poacher explained in a low voice, "This is where you get out—I'll lead them in the other direction. Keep your bearings so you can find it."

"It's getting late," Bruce remarked.

"Don't worry. It's not three and they'll be yelling until four-thirty or five. Maybe until sun-up." He walked in the lead for endless minutes, more than thirty, stopped them in another bushy stretch, under firs. "You two wait here, and keep quiet. I got to go ahead and take care of the dogs."

He slid away into the darkness.

"How will he—" Bruce started.

"He'll do what he says, don't fret. Now, here's what *Le Toubib* wants you to do, yes, Sezille—" and Brenay spoke in a steady whisper for four or five minutes. "Sounds complicated, but it isn't. You'll see it works." He stopped speaking and Bruce heard the music, now much nearer. The orchestra was playing a waltz, very familiar to him, he could think snatches of the words, but could not remember the title. Strange how distorted one's imagination became, he thought—these "sounds of revelry by night" seemed sinister here, yet entertainments were going on at all summer resorts, across these hills and into Switzerland.

Bejart reappeared soundlessly.

"All right, now, let's go ahead—I'll get you to the garden, Sparrow, then you'll be on your own. Don't fret, though, the help will be on the opposite side, nearest the main buildings, and the guards will be on our tail, not yours. Just make for the exit, and keep going. If you hear dogs barking, don't worry, they won't be after you. We're coming to the Park now, we got to circle to keep in the shadow—there'll be a bit of a moon inside a few minutes, but there's clouds—feels like a storm coming up—"

BRUCE was now carrying a fairly large camera, provided with flash and reflector. It was an awkward burden for him, yet Brenay, who toted a similar load, handled it easily. Bruce thought Sezille's scheme rather complicated and did not quite understand its purpose. Another question kept rising in his mind.

"What did you do about the dogs, Bejart?" he whispered. "Spread pepper or something?"

"Well, keep it to yourself—I just made a drag."

"A drag?"

"Sure," Bejart whispered. "Look, the hounds are kept near the janitor's lodge, at the gateway to the Château. So I went up there, and dragged a rag that smells of female across the gravel path, on the grass, for five, six hundred meters. Then I rubbed it on the trunk of a big tree, up as far as I can reach. Then I tossed it up into the branches. They use the male dogs, because they're bigger and fiercer. And I'm telling you that any dog's going to pick up that scent, follow it and stand against the tree. You'll see them holding up their torches, looking for a guy hiding there."

Bruce laughed. "A dog ought to know a female doesn't climb."

"A dog," Bejart said sententiously, "is just like you or me—what he ought to know doesn't help him when he isn't thinking. You've done just as foolish things, in your own way."

"Maybe so."

The clearing in the firs in which the bungalows were located was quite large, and one could see rather well—there was light from the pavilion, other lights strung on wires in the "rustic" garden—a pattern of grass, flower-bushes and gravel aisles forming a circle around the kiosk. And, as Bejart had announced, there was a little moonshine.

Somehow, Bruce had expected a more pretentious, luxurious show. The bungalows were really little more than oblong barracks, with narrow verandas. It was obvious that they had been erected by

army workmen. The garden had more charm, and any American young lady would have thought the benches and tables of unbarked logs "cute." Two sides of the bungalow-barracks were obviously unoccupied, boarded up.

The three stopped in the shadow of one of the structures, not two hundred feet from the kiosk. Again, Bruce was disappointed. He had somehow expected a crowded place, evidence of wealth. The place looked almost empty, and somehow preserved a desolate appearance, despite the strings of lights in paper lanterns.

Four girls were prancing, tapping, turning and bumping in the middle of the waxed floor, four shapely, almost nude bodies performing a routine dance, such as one could see in any night club from one end of the earth to the other. They were pretty girls, with that detached precision of movement and the fixed smiles that somehow invariably filled Bruce with compassionate boredom. On closer inspection, they seemed weary and more than a bit drunk.

The spectators, the fabulous Boches reported by Albert, sat at a horseshoe table made up of a dozen small tables, united by the cloth. There were vases holding flowers on the table, gleaming porcelain, glasses, silverware, there were cooling buckets from which protruded the necks of champagne bottles, magnum size. Some of the guests wore paper caps, cardboard high hats. But the party emanated ennui, sweated perfunctory listlessness.

There were nine men and six women seated. The women wore low-cut gowns, displayed arms, backs and considerable breast. They were neither very young nor striking looking. The men wore white suits and black ties. The oldest was possibly fifty-five, bald, distinguished enough in an emaciated fashion, resembling a boulevardier of the 1910 era. The youngest was about thirty-five, heavy, massive, a long, keen nose jutting from a round, pink, clean-shaven face. The set of his closely-clipped head on his neck, the movements of his jaws as he spoke, his jerky way of laughing, all proclaimed his breed—put a peaked-cap on that skull and he could have been accepted as a German in Hollywood! Between those two extremes—for the old guy was patently French—the others appeared like business or professional men.

"I'm getting the angles," Brenay whispered. "The orchestra cuts it off one way, and I've got to watch my chance because the waiters keep passing."

The dance ended and the girls trotted away, blowing back kisses, to vanish behind a screened section at the rear. The spectators exchanged a few words, arms reached for the bottles, cups were filled and drained. But it was quite the gloomiest revel Bruce had ever witnessed. Come to think of it, these chaps were little better than prisoners. As for the older women at the table, they were probably the wives or permanent sweethearts of the men they were with.

A woman emerged from the screens, handsome, tall, red-haired, wearing a fur toque and a scarlet, short tunic, her long, pink, slender legs bare to the fur-trimming of her boots. She had an accordion. She took her place near the orchestra, spoke with the pianist. There was a consultation, the rustling of music sheets. Then the strains of a famous Russian song started and two very pretty girls, dressed as Cossacks so far as headgear and little boots went, almost as nude as the classic Nubians for the rest, toe-danced to the center of the floor.

The accordionist sang the words, the girls slithered, hopped, leaped, bare knives flashed and thudded into the floor. The spectators dutifully stamped their feet in rhythm, clapped their hands. One or two hissed in Muscovite style. The old chap tossed a bill on the board, and one of the girls pinned it—on the fourth attempt—with a knife. This act over, Brenay was starting forward into the rustic garden when the orchestra started a tango and the spectators wearily came out to dance.

Several of the entertainers returned in ordinary gowns to serve as partners. Two of the women who Bruce thought were permanent guests danced together, and it was plain that they had drunk much champagne. The massive man with the close haircut propped a paper cap on his skull, deserted his partner, and did a comedy imitation of this pair. This desperate effort at gaiety made the guests laugh, the waiters smirk and the musicians yawn.

"Is this what all the fuss is about?" Bruce wondered. They were so ordinary, so—cheap. He shrugged. Had he expected Boches in dress uniforms, with crosses and

medals? Expected them to eat raw meat and to drink blood out of skulls? This was the trouble with knowing those beasts—they looked just like anybody else, until you encountered them in the line of business. They undoubtedly loved their mothers and were fond of their young ones.

THE dance over, a few of the guests disappeared for a few minutes, straggled back one by one. Waiters passed about with trays and bottles. Behind the piano, the musicians ate sandwiches from piles on a small table, drank beer or wine from small bottles. Men wiped their necks and faces, for the air was growing close, the night was alive with electricity.

"Here goes," Brenay said.

"All right, I'm off, too," Bejart approved. "You, the American—after you've done your trick, keep running down hill and don't worry, I'll pick you up. So long."

Brenay crossed the rustic garden toward the kiosk slowly. He did not crouch, made no attempt to hide. He climbed the stairway to the floor level. The musicians, within fifteen feet of him, kept on eating.

Bruce stood on a bench in the garden to watch. The skinny chap stood in the full light, fussed with the camera fastened to his chest. He bent the knees a bit, held up his left hand and waved it. Heads snapped up, faces turned toward him. There was a flash of light, an explosive pop. Brenay turned, took four swift steps to the railing, hopped down.

For an instant, no one seemed to realize what had happened. Then spectators, waiters, musicians came to life and milled about in confusion. Men shouted, the women screamed.

"The guards—the guards—who has a gun? A gun—"

Men poured down the stairway, holding bottles and chairs. Bruce leaped from the bench, started to run noisily. Several men followed him. But they followed him so carefully that he had to slow down, show himself. It was grotesque.

Quite a distance away, where Bejart was creating a diversion, a dog barked. Bruce slid between the bungalows, trotted down the slope. He was irritated because the men followed him so cautiously—he did not stop to think that they could not know he had no intention to shoot. Bruce had to pace himself, he had a job to do, and he had to make it look good. Behind him, fortunately, the timid pursuers had received reinforcements, for a hoarse voice called, "Spread wide and keep behind me in case I have to shoot—which way did he go?"

"Over there, that way—"

Bruce conveniently smashed through some bushes. A beam of light darted and licked about.

"I see you, there! Halt or I shoot!"

Bruce crouched low and ran on.

"Halt or I shoot!"

Bruce kept running. But there was no shot, only the quicker thumping of feet and the sweeping light. He halted for breath, while a number of men beat the bushes a hundred yards away. He resumed the race.

"Halt or I shoot!"

Still, no shot followed. Bruce wondered at this startling development until it occurred to him that there were outsiders present, the entertainers, who would spread their tale of adventure all the quicker if there were shooting and killing. And this would happen when he needed to be shot at—

He stopped behind a tree, took out the small automatic. He aimed four feet over the glaring eye of the torch, fired once, twice. They would hear the missiles. He was successful, for at once a tommy-gun hammered away—a burst of four, a burst of three, two spaced shots.

"Stop that shooting, stop it!" someone was roaring. "Who shot?"

"Me, Vannois."

"You know the order! You'll hear about this."

"I'm supposed to let myself be murdered, Monsieur?"

"Don't argue. Hand me your torch."

"He'll shoot."

"Hand me that torch."

There was more talking, but Bruce could no longer distinguish words. He was scuttling down the slope, many yards away. Now, he was as quiet as he could manage to be. His mission was accomplished, he had dropped a camera, a camera torn by a bullet. From time to time, he looked over his shoulder, at the flickering beam of the torch.

"Look at this, look at this—"

The triumphant shout reached him. They had found the camera.

He kept on for more than a kilometer, skirting the groves of trees, dodging swiftly across open spaces. He imagined that some distance from dangerous witnesses, the guards might not be so careful with their guns. Bejart materialized at his side, without preliminary warning sounds.

"All right, this way. Did you plant that camera?"

"Yes. Did you know about it?"

"Yes. But The Sparrow was supposed to tell you, and Sezille doesn't kid—each guy has to do just what he's told."

"He wants them to think the picture didn't get out?"

"You guessed it first crack," Bejart approved with irony. "Can't keep a thing from you."

"Why?"

"I wouldn't know."

"Where do we meet Brenay?"

"We don't. He goes to another farm and somebody'll drive him to town. Better that way, the Sana people will have the Matignons' place watched by morning. Well, American, what do you think?"

"I'm sure some of them are Boches."

"Maybe so. What I mean, you've been around—was that pretty swell entertainment?"

"First class, old man."

"Thought so. Now, let's get a move on—it's starting to rain. We'll be soaked, sure. But at your age, you don't mind it."

"Not at all," Bruce agreed.

CHAPTER X

A NEW PLAN

THE next day, the gendarmes were swarming on the mountainside. This time, the sanatorium *had* telephoned to Aurebois, and the police were mobilized. The Matignon farm was visited at about eleven o'clock by a lieutenant, three gendarmes, and the constable as a guide.

"I want a list of your people," the officer snapped to Prosper. He was youngish, thirty or a bit less, tall, lean, with snapping black eyes, a brief mustache and jaws seemingly made of steel.

Prosper rubbed his chin. "A list, Lieutenant? You mean like for the pay-roll?"

"Exactly." The officer sat at the table, one of his men took out a notebook and pencil to take notes. "Be quick, please. I have to cover the other places."

"What's the trouble?"

"Prowlers. It's becoming intolerable." The gendarme looked over the list. "I suppose you know what those people did last night?"

"No."

"How, no?"

"You ask me a question and I tell you—no." Prosper was very calm. Bruce, who stood in the doorway into the hall, one shoulder against the jamb, rather admired him. He himself had taken instant dislike to the arrogant cop.

"Well, call them in. Have them wait outside and come in as I want them."

"That's hard to do, Lieutenant. See, some of them are at mass, some on the way to mass, some on the way back. Then there are some who have gone on visits, seeing this is Sunday. Maybe the best time would be tomorrow evening, around seven."

"Haven't you some way to call them together?"

"No, Lieutenant."

The officer chewed his under lip, glared about.

"Oh, well, I suppose you can vouch for those you employ permanently. Can you call in the strangers to the region, anyone from the outside whom you haven't known a long time?"

"We have four extra hands for the harvest. Some of the upper fields are cut later—"

"I'm not interested in agriculture, my friend. And don't tell me they go to mass. I know the breed."

Inside five minutes, the four workmen were in the big kitchen, lined before the table. One by one, they laid their identity papers before the officer, who picked up each one in turn, repeated the name, which the scribe noted. He asked the same questions, in a series of barks: "Where did you come from? How long employed? Where were you last night?"

They answered without hesitation.

"You—" The officer pointed a finger at a tall, placid young chap wearing a beret—and an expression of irony. "I note that you've been in prison."

"Everybody knows it, so you don't need

"A list, Lieutenant?" Prosper asked. "You mean like for the pay-roll?"

to shout." The workman took out a pack of cigarettes, lighted one. "Yes, it shows on there. But if you'll read carefully, you'll see I'm rehabilitated. I was in the Colonial Infantry, in Egypt and in Italy, while you were cavorting about, shining up to the Boches."

"I'd watch that tongue, if I were you. I'll let you off this time, but I'll have an eye on you. I know your kind—"

"So you leave them alone."

"Beat it, the whole lot of you. What's this—" He picked up the wallet that Bruce had placed before him, opened it to the cards.

"My name's Kerrigan. You asked for the outsiders, Lieutenant."

"Yes, of course. Thank you very much." The man looked with approval at Bruce's neat summer suit, smiled. "Captain Kerrigan." He rose, saluted smartly, offered his hand. "I'm Lieutenant of Gendarmerie Barthelemy. Charmed to make your acquaintance."

"Enchanted, Lieutenant." Bruce grasped the hand warmly.

"You must think from what you've seen that you are in a country of bandits, Captain. Well, duty calls. Abel, what's our next stop?"

A moment later, after another cordial shake with Bruce and a glare at Prosper, he was off in his little motor car, chugging up hill. Prosper was purple with indignation, and Bruce smiled gently.

From that start, Bruce believed that the gendarmes would not solve the mystery of the prowlers at the Sana. But he had underestimated the French Gendarmerie, evidently. Before night on Monday, the case was broken wide open. Two boys, one sixteen, one seventeen, residents of Forlagne, could not account for being absent from their homes between eleven on Saturday night and four the following morning. Servants had reported their being scolded for these absences by their parents.

No arrests were made, the affair was dropped, although solved. Dropped because the parents now insisted their sons had not gone out. But as one of the lads was known to be passionately fond of photography, it was an easy guess whose camera had been picked up. Legal proof would be hard to present, but there was a moral certainty! Nordstrom, ever generous, was prevailed upon not to press charges.

SEZILLE'S visiting day at Forlagne came and passed without his appearing. But Bejart arrived at the farm, and after a while drew Bruce aside. "He's gone to Switzerland to check up on some leads. One of our bunch who saw him says he was satisfied that we'd finish this business in another week."

"Nordstrom has guts to call in the cops," Bruce said. "I'm starting to think there's nothing out of the ordinary up there—that Albert business may have connected with some other mixup, the girl, for instance."

"He had to bluff," Bejart opined. "I figure it this way, young man: The help up there aren't necessarily in the know about that gang, and there were the dames from

outside. There was shooting, and they'd have thought it funny, once they thought it over, that the management had done nothing. As it is, they were questioned by the cops, so they're satisfied." The poacher laughed. "Here's a new gag—they've posted the fence up there with signs warning that there are wolf-traps on the premises."

Several days passed eventlessly. Bruce was accepted as part of the farm now. Prosper was polite, even cordial, and the hands reflected his attitude. The American was feeling splendid, but a bit bored. Then, as he biked toward the village one morning, a young man who had been sitting on a kilometer-marker, smoking a cigarette, rose and tipped his cap.

"Bejart couldn't come. You're to call up *Le Toubib*."

Toubib is French Army slang for doctor, and most of the ex-partisans called Sezille thus. Bruce made for the post office, and was lucky enough to find Sezille at home.

"Come down tonight," the doctor said tersely.

"Right. How are things going?"

"Not at all well. Looked very good for a while. But petered out. We'll have to use emergency means."

"What do you mean?"

"I'll explain. And don't worry about covering up. By this time, they know what we know."

Bruce enjoyed another one of Augustine's dinners, but Sezille was in a very gloomy mood. He would not talk, saying that it wearied him and he would have to go over the whole business step by step that night before the others. Bruce was beginning to know and understand the man, knew that these odd spells of reticence, of embarrassed impatience, were a nervous manifestation, a sort of spiritual tic. He made up for it with a spate of words later.

At nine precisely, the four Resistance lieutenants arrived, Choris, Brenay, Carmelin and Beldon. The doors were closed, the curtains drawn. Sezille had a number of folders before him. He opened one and drew out a large photograph which he slid toward the American.

"The others have seen it, but I don't think you have."

It was the photo taken by Brenay up at the Sana. Artistically, it was not a good picture. The faces had the blind-fish look often found in banquet photos, almost all were distorted. But those faces could be identified. Bruce noticed numbers in black ink on each chest.

"A nice job," Sezille declared, "a nice job. It did what I wanted of it. We have identified five of the men, and all the women. Compare, old man—" He handed Bruce five passport photos and a number of snaps. Each one bore a number, corresponding to the same number on the large picture. "The women are all French, and all known as pro-Boche during the Occupation. Four are just ordinary slobs—glad to hook a man, no matter what—two were dirty—we looked for them when the chance came. They were gone. We know where now. Lures and informers." Sezille jerked his thumb and clicked his tongue. "That, not just a haircut. Man Number One: French, Hyacinthe-Timoleon de Cossel, a genuine count. Once rightist senator. Bank fraud. Man of all works for the Germans around here from the beginning. On the list of collaborators to be arrested and tried. Vanished. Five years of prison by default.

"Number Two: Frederic-Louis Lendorf, Lieutenant of SS, assigned to the Gestapo. So far the only big fish in this small fry. He was present at my questioning, but did not participate. Just there for the view, I suppose. Number Three: Wilhelm-Gustav Pappenheim. Don't know his exact rank, we have record of him as a lieutenant in the Field Police stationed at Moulins, when that city was the border spot between the Free Zone and the Occupied Zone. Easy-going, not too cruel, could be persuaded probably to shut his eyes for a consideration.

"The others are puzzling to me, in a way. The two we have identified: One's Bartenstein, initials P. V., second-lieutenant for a time in a *Nachschubkompanie* right here in Aurebois, the other is Captain Stegemann, *Zahlmeister* in this region for the last eighteen months of the Occupation. Why these two, one in the quartermaster corps, the other a paymaster, didn't go back home—I don't think anyone would have asked for them as war culprits—I don't know. Maybe because of the fact that their women were French and couldn't very well accompany them home.

"I think," Sezille concluded, "that they'll be sorry."

"And the others?"

"We don't know them. But they're in bad company. Now, by a process of elimination, I ascertained which of the patients on the list interested us. By the date of entry. Two had Polish papers, and it was impossible to check on them. There were four Swiss, however. I went to Switzerland. I shall not weary you with my search. But it turned out that all four of those Swiss had left home between 1934 and 1939, that all four were inconspicuous chaps, unmarried, without close relatives. In fact, if one could get hold of a batch of identification papers having belonged, let us say, to Swiss citizens who had died abroad, they would be the ones to select to avoid kickbacks and trouble.

"Another interesting point is that all four of these Swiss, now registered at an expensive sanatorium, were comparatively poor men in their own country. One was a hotel worker, one a watchmaker, one a salesman of novelties, one a teacher in a private school. Yet, in the turbulent years of war, all four somehow managed to make enough money to afford the extravagant prices prevailing up there, to spend additional money for entertainers from Paris. I managed to obtain pictures and physical descriptions of two of them.

"All of this, together with the photo taken at such risks by our Brenay here, I put together, with notes, and trusted to Choris, who is our ambassador to the higher authorities. One would think that what we have would be enough to start an investigation. Choris—"

CHORIS smiled, polished his glasses with a handkerchief. "I'd better explain to our young friend, Kerrigan, that I enjoy an undeserved consideration in some quarters. I was born lucky, and I married into an influential family. I know many magistrates, some of them have been my friends for many years. I'm a legitimist, or royalist, if you prefer, but a Frenchman first. During the Occupation, my relations served us well.

"I took the documents given me by the doctor and went to see a very important official. I have no doubt of his patriotism —he risked his life to help us several times, contributed money, obtained money from others, and used 'pull' to save some of our men when all hope seemed gone. He knows the law, he knows politics and even more, he knows what you might call the 'climate of a situation'—what is possible and what isn't.

"He looked at what I had to show him, and shook his head. He granted that, given to the Attorney for the Republic at the Departmental Capital, some action might be taken. But that in a court of law, with things as they are and the public disinterested, passions waning, a good lawyer, or even an ordinary lawyer, could check and delay the trials, even the arrests, and moreover clamp the lot of us, and all connected with this business, in prison under a formidable list of charges.

"Lists of personnel and patients at a licensed sanatorium obtained by blackmail, theft or bribery. A physician violating professional secrecy, probing into a colleague's affairs. A photo obtained as the result of trespassing, escalade, breaking of fence. The use of firearms as means of intimidation, the actual firing of a gun during the process.

"In a good many quarters, ex-members of the Resistance are considered to have become lawless. It seems that there is severe punishment stipulated for a magistrate who proceeds to use the legal force on illegal evidence.

"Furthermore, he found flaws we hadn't thought of: We don't know surely which identity covers which person. We cannot point out an individual on the photograph and state: That's so and so, under such and such an alias. Nordstrom, from all we know of him, is intelligent and has a genius for detail. He may have covered himself. Suppose he has scrambled his lists, shuffled names and identities. Suppose, for example, that the four Swiss on whom the doctor bases his accusation of fraudulent declaration, are actually employed at the sanatorium? That they come forward and prove their identities when the police investigates? None of them had professions incompatible with employment up there.

"He picked out an item which slipped by us: Six of the women are French, we say. No, two are married to aliens. So there is no treason. The other four are listed under their real names, not on the

patients' roster but as employees, nurses or chambermaids. He pointed out that while we, of the Resistance, have grievances against them, they have never been legally indicted, no proofs of treasonable activities have been given. It is obvious that if, at this late date, we undertook to punish every woman guilty of over-friendliness with the Occupants, we would have a titanic task—and appear fantastically unrealistic.

"He concluded that all that was mere frosting. The real tough problem facing us is that the motto in high quarters is: *'Pas d'histoires.'* No messes. Every effort is being made to prevent or to hush scandals, especially those involving officials, magistrates. France must get back on a firm footing. That must be the first consideration.

"To be absolutely honest, he said, the punishment of a quack doctor, of a handful of obscure Germans, of a half-dozen harlots, cannot be considered worth the stink. The man in the street is nervous, has lost faith, Communism is gaining rapidly—"

"No kidding?" Carmelin put in with a grin.

"Not at all," Choris replied. "And my friend predicted that if we shoved too hard along this line, our birds will vanish, our accusations will collapse and we may find ourselves behind bars. As a matter of fact, for merely discussing the matter with me and failing to report it immediately to the proper authorities, he proved to me that he was guilty of conspiracy while in office, punishable by removal, civic degradation, heavy fines and who knows how many months or years in prison."

Choris ceased speaking and lighted a fresh cigarette. The depressed silence stretched, minute after minute. It was Bruce who spoke first.

"There's the matter of possible murder, what we started with," he offered. "What happened to Albert? If we could prove that—"

"Bah, they'd say it was pneumonia," Brenay cracked.

"We'll get them," Sezille said calmly enough. "We tried to do it legally, we did the police work for the authorities. And they say: Nuts. Very well, from now on we use our own, tried methods."

"I said we should do that from the start," Carmelin reminded them. "Why this horsing around? We know who they are, where they are, so what are we waiting for?"

"Do you want to spend fifteen to twenty years at hard labor?" Choris asked, with bitter irony.

"No, though I'd mind it less than you would, Choris."

"I wouldn't wonder." Choris smiled, but he was white.

"I have a plan—" Doctor Sezille started to say.

"Just a moment, please." Choris rose, adjusted the set of his jacket carefully. "I am very sorry, but I can no longer go along with you. You know I never hesitated or flinched when it was a question of the national enemy. I regret that my entire education, my principles, make me extremely reluctant to break the laws of France."

"Are you serious, Marcel?" Sezille asked, half-smiling.

"Do I look as if I were joking? Don't worry, you can be sure of my discretion." Choris looked from man to man. They had shared dangers for four years. It was the end.

He waited for several seconds, perhaps hoping that they would shake hands. Then he opened the door, stepped out. "Good night, *Messieurs.*"

Again, there was a long silence, then Carmelin spoke. "And that's that. He's gone back to his side. Long live the king! But you were saying, before the interruption, Sezille . . . ?"

"I have a plan—if Kerrigan will help us."

"You know I will."

"No offense intended, thought you might be fed up. I wouldn't blame you. We have two goals—to settle with the Boches and to do it without being jailed. We must have a semblance of legality. To start with, we have to find out exactly what those Boches are. Prosper Matignon knows more than he admits. We'll sweat some information out of him. Then we'll work out something legal enough to start us—and leave them such a mess they'll be afraid to touch it."

He refilled the glasses.

"Here's the way we'll work it . . ."

(End of Part II)

THE TRAIL AHEAD

He came into the world on the teeth of a blow that sent three ships to the bottom and scattered bodies like driftwood along the Huron shore. . . . Before he grew kneehigh to a marlinspike he could pronounce crojik and spr'sl't'g'lns'l and knew all the two hundred and fifty different items connected with the rigging of an ordinary three-master. . . . He could box the compass, read the glass, sight the sun, chart the stars, heave a sounding lead, steer by guess and by God, tie a Washington-to-Norfolk-boat-heaving-line knot, and plat a solid sennit before he knew enough history to understand that he owed allegiance to an alligator-hided hellion of a president named Andy Jackson. . . . Then they shipped him off to Europe where he developed a taste for vintage wines, swordplay, blooded horses, cockfights and pistols at dawn. . . . When he returned to the Lake Region with an Irish wolfhound loping at his heels you might say he was a well-rounded character, Thunder Bay McCargo, but you can make up your own minds when you meet him next month in—

"CAPTAIN McCARGO'S QUARTET"

By William Ratigan

—the first novelette in a fine new series by a distinguished newcomer to these pages. We'll have to skimp on McCargo's vocabulary and swab the deck for the carriage trade, but you'll get the meat of him, minus sulphur and saltpetre, with grammar shipshape and the captain's shirt nailed to the mast. And to help bring him alive—illustrations by the inimitable Gordon Grant!

Plus "March North"—a gripping tale of the French Foreign Legion in Mexico by Robert Carse. . . . "Rusty Guns"—an exciting novelette set in the oil-soaked homestead lands of Oklahoma Territory by Clifton Adams. . . . Action-packed yarns of Columbia River steamboating by Hector Chevigny—of the camel caravans that sweat their way across Ethiopia's burning Ogaden Desert by Robinson MacLean—of the thoroughbreds and silk-shirted jockeys who pound them down the stretch on the big-time racing circuit by Giles A. Lutz—of a squirrel hunt that turned into a manhunt in spite of itself in the fog-bound barrens of Alaska's Seward Peninsula by R. D. Hamilton. . . . The next thrilling instalment of Georges Surdez' great serial, "Restricted!" . . . And, of course, the usual unusual assortment of fact stories, features and informative departments you can expect each month only in—

ON SALE JANUARY 9th

THE CAMP-FIRE

Where Readers, Writers and Adventurers Meet

HORSES, horses, horses! We seem to have been caught in a stampede of assorted nags ranging from a stud of modern thoroughbreds all the way back to the petrified bones of the fox-sized Eohippus. Nothing but the smell of saddle leather in our nostrils and the beat of hooves in our ears as we start to poke the fire this month. It all began when the following provocative communication arrived on our desk a few months ago—

Dear K. S. W.—During recent years in these sentimental United States, there has been occasion to observe or celebrate a number of National "Weeks."

We have National Boy Scout Week, Girl Scout Week, Swim For Health Week, Hobby Week, Music Week, Baseball Week, Foot Health Week, Tennis Week and so on, ad infinitum. Many of them are of unquestioned merit. The value of others, I stick my neck out to remark, is moot, to say the least.

Most astonishingly absent from the roster, however, is any Week specifically devoted to Old Dobbin and his clan. True enough, there are scores of horse shows every year, and memorials to certain famous members of the horse family, but to the *genus* as a whole there is no national time for commemoration.

When a little thought is given to what the Horse has meant and still means to this country, compared to some of the other things celebrated, a National Horse Week becomes almost obligatory. Consider only a few of the thousands of contributory facts.

On March 3, 1519 there was not one horse on the Western Hemisphere. There were some remains of the fox-sized Eohippus, assertedly a progenitor of the modern horse, but even those remains were not discovered until more than three hundred years later.

Then, on March 4, 1519, Hernando Cortez landed on a Mexican beach with eleven stallions and five mares. For actual and potential romance and drama, the landing of those sixteen horses stands preeminent until the coming of the steam engine, and perhaps longer than that.

It is not accurately known just what their value was in ducats, doubloons or the coin of the period, but with the help of those sixteen horses, Cortez and his men gained an empire for the Spanish Crown.

In 1521, Ponce de Leon brought fifty more horses to the New World; Alvarado came with twenty; then Narvaez with a real horse herd of 983 head and De Soto with 273 in 1539.

In 1609, the Virginia settlers landed six mares and two stallions at Jamestown. Far to the north, in 1629, the Pilgrims brought over some brood mares and stallions, and at about the same time the Dutch landed both saddle and draft animals.

These were the beginnings of a horse population which had increased to the astronomic total of sixteen million head in the United States by 1925.

If sentiment, romance, drama and the thunder of hooves in war are not enough to warrant a National Horse Week, let us consider the financial angle.

By 1940, the horse census had dropped to about *twelve million head,* but they were valued at nearly *two billion dollars,* with a by-product, so to speak, of some *five million mules* whose worth was reckoned to be more than *half a billion dollars.* Consider now all the money, directly and indirectly put in circulation through four hundred years of growing, selling and racing horses. Remember the plowing, harvesting and lumbering for at least two hundred years, and do not forget that horses and mules are still used for such work.

Remember the ore wagons, the mine cars and stone boats; the coaches, the Conestogas and Concords. The surreys and victorias and Phaetons; the traps and tallyhos and the dog carts; the Democrat wagons and buckboards and side-bar buggies, the cabs and hacks. At least one hundreds years for some or all of these vehicles, and many more not mentioned in this summary. And the horse-drawn street cars on the streets of every city

in the land. And do not forget the long lines of circus wagons rumbling through the night.

In figures of circulating money, the answer to all this is—Plenty!

Hasn't the Horse done enough for our country to justify a National Horse Week each year?

—Harry Galbraith
Box 486
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Generally speaking, we're ag'in any more of these "Weeks" and think there are far too many of 'em already. (Unless someone wants to promulgate a Be Kind to Editors Week in which case we'll be glad to participate in the celebration!) However, Brother Galbraith presents a good case for Dobbin and we're afraid he's converted us to his cause. We passed his letter along to John Richard Young, our *Ask Adventure* expert on matters equine in hopes of eliciting a comment "straight from the horse's mouth" as it were, and here's what he answered—

Mr. Galbraith's idea for a National Horse Week seems to me an excellent idea. America today is too mechanized, too mechanical-minded. Thousands of people ride horseback for fun—but there are millions who don't, millions whose idea of fun is to squat behind a steering wheel and watch the billboards fly past.

Yet America today, despite mechanization, is the world's greatest horse country. In our hands we have concentrated the finest bloodlines in horsedom, thanks mainly to the American Remount Association and the U. S. Army.

The trouble is that more Americans don't *know* this; they do not realize the wealth of superb horseflesh within easy reach, and the pleasure to be enjoyed therefrom. How many Americans are aware that soon there will be a horseback riding trail following the western slope of the Sierra-Nevada mountains from the Mexican border to the Oregon border, 1200 miles of the trail through national forests, and with overnight camps for riders and their mounts every 20 or 30 miles? If California horsemen can do this, with an initial appropriation of $300,000, why can't other states?

The same thing can be, has been, done on a smaller scale. In Macon County, Illinois, horsemen banded together and with cooperation from the Decatur Park Board, developed 15 miles of riding trails, and built a show-ring, a clubhouse and three modern horse barns. They hold trail rides, shows, rodeos The whole system is organized on nonprofit lines. The idea is to have fun.

Cook County, Illinois has miles of riding trails. In the Rock River area of Illinois several riding clubs sponsored a two-day trail ride in which by actual count 498 riders took part. That number may yet be surpassed. The American Albino Horse Club is contemplating a trail ride from Nebraska to California, with anyone who wants to go along for the ride welcome.

A National Horse Week, I think, is exactly what we need to call to the attention of a majority of Americans, especially the youth of the land, the lifelong pleasures to be enjoyed from horsemanship, whether with riding or harness horses. But let's keep it practical, nonprofitable and unsentimental. Merely orating or writing flowery Tributes to the Horse one week out of 52 is useless, a waste of time. Merely recalling what the horse *has* done for mankind invariably ends up in sloppy sentimentality. Let's get interested in horses—selfishly interested, if you prefer—by finding out what they *can* and *will* do for *us*, if we'll do something for *them*. They will give you health, sport, relaxation and fun, companionship and personal pride you will never get in any other way.

John Trotwood Moore said it well—

"Out from the past, the dim, bloody, shifting past, came this noble animal, the horse, side by side with man, fighting with him the battles of progress, bearing with him the burdens of the centuries. Down the long, hard road, through flint or mire, through swamp or sand, wherever there has been a footprint, there also will be seen a hoofprint. They have been one and inseparable, the aim and the object, the means and the end. And if the time shall ever come, as some boastingly declare, when the one shall breed away from the other, the puny relic of a once-perfect manhood will not live long enough to trace the record of it on the tablet of time."

Another letter from "Chico Harry" Galbraith (He's an ex-cowboy, rode the range for ten years and recently has been writing articles and fiction—has a story in Fairfax Downey's forthcoming "Anthology of Best Horse Stories!") calls our attention to the fact that President Truman recently set a "National Cat Week!" Anyone interested in developing Mr. Galbraith's idea, so ably seconded by Jack Young, better hurry up and climb in the saddle before the calendar gets full and there aren't any more weeks left. We know that either of those two men will be glad to hear from kindred-minded spirits and we'll be glad to do what we can to further the good cause in these pages from time to time. We'd certainly rather have a horse in the yard than a cat any day!

ONLY two recruits to the ranks of our Writers' Brigade this month. C. Hall Thompson, who gives us "Dynamite De-

tour" on page 44, introduces himself succinctly thuswise on appearing on our contents page for the first time—

> Born St. Patrick's Day, 1923; Philadelphia stock from way back (even to the Indians—my great-great grandmother was a breed). Have had the usual bizarre collection of jobs every writer has before he becomes a writer. Salesman in a bookstore, correspondent, special investigator (for only a day), portrait sketcher for a plastic surgeon. . . . So far as my knowledge of the routine of transcontinental trucking is concerned: my father operates his own repair shop for anything from truck to jeep. During summers I used to work in the garage and there I picked up what I know from the boys who drive the trucks themselves.
>
> No, I wasn't there when the bridge in "Dynamite Detour" went out but the story is based on an actual incident.

THERE'S not much resemblance between the Royal Canadian Mounted Police trooper on our cover this month and his counterpart of 1885 whose picture appears on page 57. Uniform different—even the name of the Force in which he served has changed. Then it was the North-West Mounted Police, and at the time of Inspector Dickens' service it had been organized only twelve years. In June 1904 the name of the Force was officially changed to Royal North-West Mounted Police and again in 1920 to Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the name it now bears.

W. B. Cameron, whose article "Charles Dickens' Son—Indian Fighter" on page 52 marks his first appearance in these pages, was for many years in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company and subsequently was Custodian of Records and Official Librarian of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Curator of the R.C.M.P. Museum at Regina. He also was editor of *Field & Stream* way back in 1897.

In June 1925, when the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada finally got around to erecting a bronze tablet on the site of the Frog Lake Massacre in honor of those who died there, Mr. Cameron, as the last white survivor of the affray, was chosen to unveil the memorial.

At the conclusion of the historic ceremony the Rev. Edward Ahenakew, a full-blooded Cree descendant of Indians who had participated in the massacre but now an ordained clergyman of the Church of England, read the eulogy!

GEORGES SURDEZ as you know, despite the fact that he now lives in Brooklyn, has at one time or another spent considerable time in various far corners of the World—Africa, Asia, etc. Also, as you may have gathered from reading his fiction, articles and answers to queries sent to him as an *Ask Adventure* expert, he has a startling propensity for being accurate and authentic in matters of detail and boasts a memory as long as the proverbial elephant's. All of which is merely introduction to a confession he made to us over the luncheon table one day last week.

Mr. Surdez, it seems, whenever he has a bit of free time, likes to spend it wandering through New York's remarkable Bronx Zoo. He particularly enjoys the fine exhibits of animals from various foreign lands in which he himself has traveled and adventured. Not long ago, accompanied by a friend, he was examining the rhinoceros and observed a splendid new acquisition among the beasts wallowing in the muddy pits. The great animal caught his attention because of a livid scar which ran a couple of feet or more along one side.

"I know that beast," Surdez remarked casually to his friend. "Seen it somewhere before, I'm sure. . . Let me think." He pondered a moment while the friend waited on tenterhooks for Georges' memory to work, envisioning the while a forthcoming anecdote of a moonlight night on some jungle riverback with Surdez' tent pitched hard by a rhino wallow. Georges cudgeled in vain however and finally resorted to asking the keeper the history of the mammoth beast.

"That one?" the zoo attendant replied. "Oh, yes. We just got him last week from the Brooklyn Zoo."

"Of course," Georges said. "I used to see him every day there." And turning to his friend, "I told you I was acquainted with that rhino."—K.S.W.

ASK ADVENTURE

Information You Can't Get Elsewhere

IVORY inlay for a gunstock.

Query:—My hobby is guns. I have a number of good ones and would like to dress some of them up a little bit—I mean inlay the stocks with small pieces of ivory, German silver, or polished brass—but I do not know how to go about it. Please tell me what tools I would need. Also give me a rough idea of how to do it. If there are any books or other literature on the subject, please mention them to me.

—Ray Kummer
324 Myrtle Ave.
Buffalo, N. Y.

Reply by Donegan Wiggins:—Here is the method used by two men I know who have done a lot of inlay work on firearms, and do it well indeed. Two of my own heavy Smith & Wessons have ivory inlay put on by them, and they look fine.

The method followed is this: the design is sawed or filed from a thin slab of ivory, which can be secured by getting old billiard balls that are either chipped, or out of true from long use, and cut into thin slabs or slices, with a fine-toothed hacksaw. In most cases, hearts, clubs, spades, diamonds, from playing cards are selected. Glue these on the ivory slabs, and after the adhesive dries, they are ready for the scroll-sawing.

Now, with a fine chisel, using great care to follow plainly the outline of the ivory, which has been glued on the flat surface of the walnut stock, inscribe a line about the designed object, after which remove the ivory, or other material, and chisel out the wood. When the proper depth is reached, smooth it up, and after coating the bottom of the cavity with cement, place the ivory in the cavity, place a small clamp on it, and allow to dry a few days. It makes a fine job, if properly executed, as many local men who have had their rifles and pistols so treated, and with different materials, will testify.

One man I know has had a pair of buffalo nickels so inserted in the grips of his .22 Colt Woodsman, the buffalo standing on one side, the metal surrounding the figure having been filed away, while from the other side the old warrior frowns. A nice job.

Any metal or colored material can be so inserted; it's not tricky at all. Easy and inexpensive.

I know of no books on the subject.

THE Mohammedan slaves of Georgia's Sea Islands.

Query:—Can you give me any of the facts concerning "Bulally," the African slave in colonial times on one of the islands near Brunswick, Ga.? Where are his descendants? Is it true there are records kept in Arabic by them? Where would such be available for students?

—L. S. Glick
Box 165
Jamul, Calif.

Reply by Harold Preece:—Eight gates open into Paradise, says the Holy Koran, obeyed to the last jot and tittle by the devout Fula slaves of Colonel Thomas Spalding on Sapelo Island. But when the Fulas desperately pros-

trated themselves before Allah, three times a day, they felt that the ninth gate had slammed shut behind them. And the ninth gate leads straight to hell with its swarms of jinns—evil spirits, condemned by the Prophet, who are tougher than the swarms of mosquitoes buzzing up from the Georgia coast.

Through the Fula songs, used as a code language in the rice fields, they described to each other what had happened since the slavers had delivered them here to the most powerful jinns of the sea. One song lamented the death of twenty tribesmen when the sea jinns had risen up out of the water to board the slave ship bringing them over, and left a plague of fever An answering song told how half a dozen more had been washed away by great tidal waves which made the island shores a place of taboo for men used to the arid mountains and deserts of Africa. That song concluded with a final verse saying that, from this place, there was no escape since the sea with its watchful jinns lay in every direction.

When they started lying down in the fields, committing themselves to Allah and dying, the plantation overseer took counsel with one of their number who had learned a little of the white man's tongue.

"If you would have us live and work in this new land," the Fula pled with the overseer, "bring us our king from the old land. For the king is the shadow of Allah, stronger than all the sorcery of the jinns. But when a people have no king, the jinns mock and destroy them."

Six months later, the slave ship, dodging American and British patrol cutters, smuggled its next load of human cargo to the Sea Islands. It brought to the Spalding plantation a tall jet-black young Negro whose finely-chiseled features were set off by the bright red fez of an orthodox Mohammedan; his wife, whose aquiline face showed a far-off trace of Berber or Arab; and seven small girls talking in scared, nervous whispers to each other. Colonel Spalding's man lost no time in marching the family to the slave quarters where the Fulas squatted in their cabins, having finally quit work altogether. The overseer motioned the new arrivals toward the quarters and then discreetly withdrew.

The man who knew a little English saw them first. He stood up, rubbed his eyes and began shouting in the Fula tongue, "Bulali Mahomet! Bulali Mahomet! The old king could not come, but he sent his son to rule over the Fulas across the great water."

Then the rest of the captive tribe came pouring from their cabins to kneel before one of their own royal house. Bul-Ali stood majestically in the center of the kow-towing assembly, receiving their homage as a matter of natural right. Then, when the Fulas had escorted him and his family to the clean new cabin prepared for them, he stood in the door and measured, with imperious eyes, each familiar face. But to none did he show more than the dignified reserve which a king must wear as his armor.

The next day, the Fulas went back to work, singing songs of deliverance from the sea jinns as they reaped the rice with the big cradles made of wood and wire. And stepping naturally into the post of gang boss, Bul-Ali stood at the head of the field, scolding the lazy and praising the industrious.

"To work, children of the Prophet," he would call in a voice that had the deep, unstudied ring of royalty when the slaves lagged. "The jinns were not in the sea but in your reapers."

Then when the time came for Noon Prayer, he would begin intoning in Arabic, the sacred language of all Mohammedans: *"Ash-hadu an-la ilaha ilal-lah, wa anna muhammadan rassul-ul-lah.* (I bear witness that there is no God but The God and that Mahomet is the Messenger of God.")

Then the Fulas would drop their tools, leave the field, run to the trees where hung their prayer mats made of sheepskin, face eastward and kneel in a clean place, obeying the Call to Prayer sounded by their young king. The native-born Negroes, brought up in the Christian faith, would also run but toward the deep woods on the opposite side of the field, fearing that they would be "hoodooed" if they stayed and watched the strange rites.

A few weeks after Bul-Ali's arrival on Sapelo, he showed his contempt for the sea jinns by commanding the Fulas to build log canoes so they could supplement the doled-out plantation fare by fishing. Invoking powerful curses from the Koran, he forbade his tribesmen to drink and gamble—habits which they had fallen into during that demoralizing period of being without a chief. "Satan seeketh to sow dissension and hatred among you by means of wine and lots," he thundered from the Koran when he discovered a group of his people drinking and gaming in an out-of-the way corner. "They who are delivered over to perdition shall have boiling water to drink."

Thus began the fifty-year reign of one who was both king and slave in a country which professed to have no need of kings but had a great need for slaves.

To this day, no one on the Sea Islands can say positively that the proud and pious Moslem prince, Bul-Ali Mahomet, came voluntarily to join his people in exile. One legend has it that he persuaded the slavers to take him as a substitute for his father, too old to make a long voyage to a strange land. Still another story, current on Sapelo, is that he was employed by Arabs to round up "recruits" for the slave compounds that were the "wholesale" houses for American and British traders. The Arabs, it is claimed, shackled him and his family along with the last batch of captives brought to them. Then, it is said, they sold Bul-Ali Mahomet, his wife and daughters to the same slavers commissioned to bring back his father.

The latter story is the most convincing one. To have captured the king would have meant a stiff battle with reckless Fula warriors, scornful of death and, maybe, a brush with the French troops guarding the Sudan against

slavers. Then, too, the traders may have decided that nine young Negroes would bring a better price than one old Negro, likely as not to die on shipboard.

Whatever the truth, the legend of Bul-Ali grows with the years, with the number of descendants from his seven known daughters and his twelve supposed sons. One celebrated scholar of our time took a photostated copy of his Arabic writings, now enshrined in the Georgia State Library, to North Africa seeking to have it translated by learned *malams.* Refusing to believe that any Negro who ever lived in America could write Arabic, the *malams* were of little help. They declared the thirteen pages of closely-written script to be the work of jinns and, no doubt, considered the "infidel" scholar to be an emissary of jinns.

The *malams* walked out in terror after reading only a few sentences of the manuscript. Then the scholar, with a little assistance from other Orientalists, pieced together the meaning of the document. The writings in the Mahgrebine, or western Arabic, were not what Georgians had sentimentally believed them to be—a diary of Bul-Ali's life in America. They were a series of quotations from the Risala, a famous legal book of the ultra-orthodox Malekite school of Mohammedan theology. The whole style of the document showed that it had been written from memory, and Moslems are generally taught the sacred books "by heart" before they are ever taught to write. Moreover, mistakes in grammar and spelling showed that Bul-Ali must have still been learning written Arabic when he left his homeland.

This much is definitely known: that Bul-Ali was a native of Timboo (not to be confused with Timbuctoo), a town of the Mandingo kingdom of Bambara in the French colony of Upper Senegal. The Fulas are a black aristocracy who live scattered among many tribes over a huge area from the Nile to the Niger. They were among the first and most fanatical converts to the religion of the Prophet in Africa. They helped spread that religion with the sword, building an empire or two in the process. It is thought that Bul-Ali's father was the chief of a Fula district in the territory of their equally orthodox co-religionists, the Mandingoes. The son is said to have still been under thirty when he arrived here a few years (the exact date is unknown) before the War of 1812. He must have married, while still a boy in his teens, to have produced seven children at the time that he became the unquestioned ruler of the Moslems living under the American flag on Sapelo Island.

For within six months after his arrival, Bul-Ali was running the Spalding plantation and not even the white overseer dared countermand his orders. Within a year, the colonel didn't know his own plantation.

Displaying the same organizing genius that the Fulas had shown when they forged quarreling, feuding tribes into empires, Bul-Ali took hold of his master's estate, and made it a model for all Georgia. Impatient of the slip-shod method by which Sapelo planters kept accounts, he instituted his own system of bookkeeping. One of Spalding's nephews wrote of how Bul-Ali kept careful records in Arabic of all that came in and all that went out on the plantation. Every pound of rice, every bale of cotton, every dollar spent on subsistence for the slaves had to be accounted for in Bul-Ali's books. The Spaldings lost these records, and a great deal else, during the Civil War.

To the prince-in-captivity belongs also the credit for introducing the eight-hour day in Georgia. But as far as happy-go-lucky Sapelo was concerned, eight hours represented an unpleasant stretch-out of the work day. Before Bul-Ali came, the Spalding slaves, like the rest of the Negroes on Sapelo, worked four or five hours a day. The rest of the time, they hunted, wandered through the woods, or cultivated their own vegetable gardens.

But when some of the Fulas continued to slip off for drinking and gambling sprees, Bul-Ali decided that his subjects had too much leisure for their own good. One morning, he announced that eight hours work would now be demanded from every able-bodied slave. In addition, each man would be held to an assigned quota of work during the workday. If a crew was assigned to dig a ditch, each worker would be given a certain number of feet in length, breadth, and depth to be completed by quitting time. But as just as he was stern, the royal boss always made a time deduction if the digger's shovel hit a stump or a root.

Bul-Ali now carried as his sceptre of power a long whip—"a thong of leather half an inch wide and a quarter of an inch thick." But the whip was rarely used because the lash of Bul-Ali's tongue cut deeper than any lash carried in his hand.

When Colonel Spalding went to Washington as a congressman from Georgia, he left his plantation confidently in the hands of the tall Negro who ran the place efficiently and profitably for his owner. And Bul-Ali, unknowingly, was becoming a famous man in the world outside Sapelo, due to the Colonel's bragging.

Prominent figures in that dead world of the ante-bellum South jumped at invitations tendered by Spalding to visit Sapelo and meet his "royal family of Moors." Bowing grandly before the colonel's guests, Bul-Ali would show them his accounts in Arabic. If they asked to meet his family, he would call his wife and daughters and introduce them one by one—Phoebe, the uncrowned queen of the island because she was married to its uncrowned king; and the seven girls, Margaret, Hester, Charlotte, Yarruba, Fatima, Medina, and Bintoo.

But there were two subjects which he would never dicuss—his religion, or his past life back there in Africa.

"The truth is in the hands of Allah," he would say tersely if visitors tried to draw him out on his faith. "And the truth shall be revealed by Allah."

If they bothered him with questions about

Africa, he would reply with brief finality, "That was one land. And this is another land."

Like many other Americans of his race, he was to prove his loyalty to the new land when it was attacked by an enemy.

When the war of 1812 came, British agents filtered through the South, promising the slaves their freedom if they would revolt. African drums, calling the black bondsmen to secret meetings in the woods, began pounding on the Sea Islands and even on Sapelo. Refugee planters from Santo Domingo, now living in these islands, remembered what had happened in their country when the slaves took up arms and established a black republic. Wild rumors of Negroes storing arms swept up and down the South Atlantic coast, and whites on the Sea Islands began fleeing to the mainland. Then Bul-Ali took hurried counsel with his closest friend, African Tom, another Fula who served as butler to the Spalding's neighbors, the Coupers. The two black men never told the whites what methods they used to nip any impending rebellion. But there was no revolt on the Sea Islands.

Very possibly, the two Africans may have also gone to South Carolina to head off intended uprisings. An old historian relates "two instances to the southward of Charleston where gangs of Negroes were prevented from deserting to the enemy by drivers, as colored foremen were called—and, what is still more remarkable, in both instances the Negroes were Africans and professors of the Mohammedan religion." It is generally agreed that these two Africans were Bul-Ali and Tom.

When it seemed Admiral Cockburn's British forces, ravaging the coast, would attack Sapelo, Bul-Ali went to Colonel Spalding and pleaded that he be allowed to arm a company of eighty picked Negroes. With other planters swearing that this was a ruse of the slaves to get guns, the colonel promptly wrote the Governor boasting to His Excellency that he and Bul-Ali "would make a good account of them" if the British attacked.

The governor sent eighty muskets, and Bul-Ali armed his eighty-man black militia. Day after day, the slave soldiers marched up and down the island, patrolling beaches where the British might attempt a landing. And as they drilled and practiced riflery, they heard Bul-Ali thundering in their ears that traditional promise of Allah to the faithful—that those who die in battle shall be carried instantly to Paradise and be blessed, through eternity, with the company of beautiful houris.

There is an old yarn that Bul-Ali placed a page of the Koran over each musket to encourage his men to battle to the death if an attack came. Whatever the truth, Sapelo was left untouched although nearby St. Simon suffered heavily from Cockburn's raids.

Bul-Ali's courage and loyalty during the war were discussed at every roadside tavern in Georgia. Other planters came to Colonel Spalding, offering as high as twenty-five thousand dollars for his prize slave although the top price for an exceptional Negro hardly ever exceeded even two thousand dollars.

But patrician cannot sell patrician under that code of gentlemen which goes beyond all differences in creed and ritual. Colonel Spalding would shake his head at each offer. And, then, not to offend his guest, he would say lightly: "I'd have to travel all the way to Arabia to see the celebration of the Mohammedan fasts if I didn't have Bul-Ali and his family here. Let me pour you another drink while I tell you how they keep the Fast of Ramadan."

For in the ninth month of the year, according to the erratic Mohammedan calendar, Bul-Ali and the other Moslem Negroes ceased all work and fasted for thirty days from sunset to sunrise. During the sacred season of Ramadan, no Moslem in good health may eat or drink during the daylight hours, and only sparingly at nightfall. Ramadan is the holy month when the Koran was handed to the Prophet from heaven, when man himself must atone for his sins to be worthy of the seven heavens promised the righteous by the Prophet. It is a time of incessant prayer when the gates of Paradise are swung open, but the gates of hell are shut and the devils down below shackled in chains. Those who keep the fast are promised remission of all sins, and those who keep it shall pass through that main gate to Paradise called Raiyah.

At the season of Ramadan, Bul-Ali would turn over the management of the plantation to the white overseer, and devote himself entirely to the ecstasies of his religion. He would repeat, not as a burden but as a solemn duty, all the multitude of extra prayers prescribed by the Koran and the Books of the Law for the holy month. At night, he would sit on a bench outside his cabin watching for shooting stars—the stones thrown by the angels of Heaven at the bad jinns trying to eavesdrop at the heavenly gates.

Great-grandchildren of Bul-Ali on Sapelo still remember how hungry they were during the Ramadan fast kept by the old prince's daughters long after his death. Anxiously, the children would watch for the sun to go down. Then one of the daughters would call them in, gather them around a table, say "a-meen, a-meen," and hand them rice balls, filled with honey and meal, called "sarika."

As the years went by, Bul-Ali's face became wrinkled and sere, like the pages of his beloved Koran. Each Ramadan, during those last years of his life, found his hair whiter and his step less firm. But, always, he kept that look of proud majesty which forbade any to call him by the familiar term of "uncle."

In his old age, the Spaldings showed him the deference that is due retired royalty. When he died, shortly before the Civil War, they fulfilled their obligations of patricians to patrician by seeing that the Koran and his sheepskin prayer mat were buried with him.

And down to this day, the succeeding generations of his descendants still have the same delicately-chiseled features, the same regal bearing and the same aristocratic courtesy of

their royal ancestor. They have long since exchanged the Crescent for the Cross and Fula-Arabic for the lazy, soft seech of Georgia. But their neighbors call them "quality folks." And that may be Sapelo's way of paying final and losting tribute to its prince.

Some of his descendents remember some of his prayer words—some of his African expressions—and this has probably given rise to the legend that they still adhere to the Mohammedan faith. Actually they're good shouting Baptists, Holiness, etc.

DEAD Indians.

Query:—Can you give me any information on the burial customs of Indians? I wish to know how their burial customs of today differ or compare with those of earlier times. Have they adopted more modern burial customs? Just how do they bury their dead?

—James H. Glass
Box 469
Conway, Ark.

Reply by H. F. Robinson:—Your question regarding the burial customs of the American Indians covers so much ground that it will be difficult to really answer it in any great detail, for as there are over 700 tribes of Indians in North America and their customs are different. I can only cover it in the most general manner.

It may be said that bodies of the dead are disposed of in two ways, burial and cremation, but the method of the burial differs greatly. The usual method of burial has been to inter in pits, graves or holes in the ground, and the grave may be under the floor if they are house dwellers, in stone cists, in mounds, in lodges or caves, and perhaps in crevices in the rocks.

In the last few years most of the Indians give regular burial in cemeteries. The Sioux formerly buried on a scaffold, and some in trees. I have seen the Apaches in this state where they had buried babies, wrapped in their cradle boards and placed in the branches of pine or piñon trees. In the Colorado River Valley they cremate, generally by building a funeral pyre of logs in which the body is placed. I do not know what is done with the ashes. In the many prehistoric ruins of the Salt River in Arizona many urns or ollas are found in the ruins, sealed over the top with clay in which are the ashes and bone fragments of the dead.

In the northwest coast tribes little burial houses are constructed in which the dead are placed. Among the Blackfeet Indians of Montana a heavy wooden box is constructed in which the body is placed and the box is not buried, but placed preferably on a hill top. The Hopi doubles up the body, with the knees against the chest and buries in a sitting position with a "digging stick" over the grave if a man, and a basket if a woman. Babies are often placed in a cleft in the rocky mesas.

The cliff dwellers of the southwest frequently buried the dead under the floor of the dwelling and the early town dwellers may have done the same or buried them in the kitchen midden, or perhaps in a plot used as a cemetery.

The Navajo is very much afraid of the body of the dead and if anyone dies in the hogan or house, the house is either set on fire or abandoned. And to prevent the necessity of losing the house, if they believe a person is about to die, he is taken out in the open, away from the house.

I hope that these few instances may help you. They are practically all from my personal observation.

If you will write to the Smithsonian Institution, or the National Museum in Washington, D. C., they can probably refer you to government publications with more information.

LA LEGION Etrangere.

Query:—(1) When did Colonel Dodds have command of the French Foreign Legion? And was he an American, an Englishman, or a Frenchman with merely an Anglo-Saxon name?

(2) When was the regimental base depot of the 2nd Regiment Etrangere shifted from Saida to Oran?

(3) What were the names of the Regimental Commanders, 1st Regiment Etrangere and 2nd Regiment Etrangere, when the Legion went to France in the late summer of 1914 to fight against the Germans in World War I?

(4) What was the prevailing color of the uniforms of the French Army in World War II, horizon blue or khaki?

—Lt. Col. Thomas L. Sullivan
24 Bogandale Rd.,
West Roxbury 32, Mass.

Reply by Georges Surdez:—(1) Colonel Dodds commanded the Expedition to Dahomey, in 1892, if I recall rightly, and among his troops was a battalion of the Foreign Legion. He was a Colonial Army officer and not a Legionnaire. He was a Frenchman, born in 1842 at Saint Louis du Senegal. I'm told that he was a mulatto and his photographs make this probable. In any case, in ordinary times, an officer must become French when he passes the rank of captain. I don't believe there is an instance of an officer commanding a battalion unless he was born French or naturalized.

(2) The 2nd Regiment was not shifted to Oran but to Meknes, Morocco, in 1920.

(3) In 1914, the two regiments of the Foreign Legion did not send complete regiments to France, but shipped off detachments to serve for the cores of March Regiments formed with war time volunteers. The history of the Legion for that war is very complicated (not as much as for World War II, I'll admit!) and it would take a small book to start clearing up things. The First Regiment of Legion had a March (or Field) Regiment serving in Morocco, called No. 1, so that the March

Regiment of the First Regiment that fought in France was No. 2 and was organized at Camp de Mailly, under Colonel Pein.

The March Regiment of the Second Regiment of Legion was also March Regiment No. 2 (of the 2nd) because there was a March Regiment of the 2nd Legion in Morocco. This was formed also at the Camp de Mailly, from elements arrived from Saida and from war volunteers. It was commanded by Colonel Passard from October 1914 to December 1914, when Lt. Colonel Lecomte Denis took over.

The First Regiment of Legion had a 3rd March Regiment, composed of war volunteers from the region of Paris and officered by men from the Paris Fire Department. It was commanded by Colonel Thiebault from September 4, 1914 to November 20, 1914, then by Lt. Colonel Desgouilles until August 13, 1915, when it merged with another unit.

There was a 4th March Regiment of the 1st Foreign Legion Regiment, short-lived, composed of Garibaldian volunteers, Italians commanded by Colonel Garibaldi. This outfit was something distinct. It performed splendidly. But it was disbanded on March 5, 1915, most of its members going to serve in their national army as Italy had entered the war.

In the summer of 1915, the 3rd March Regiment of the 1st merged with the 2nd of the 1st, as its ranks had been decimated in action. The colonel of this 3rd of the 1st was by then Denis. Denis was replaced in October 1915 by Lieutenant-Colonel de Lavenne de Choulot until the merger of both remaining March Regiments into a single one, called Regiment de Marche de la Legion Etrangere. The commander of this merged outfit, dating from November 11, 1915 to the end, was Col. Lieutenant-Colonel Duriez took over from February 15, 1917 to April 17, 1917, then Major Deville, from April 17, 1917 to April 29, 1917—after that date, Rollet took over and held command until the end—the one and only Rollet, the greatest Legionnaire.

There was also a Regiment de Marche d'Afrique en Orient, "March Regiment of Africa in the Orient," that fought at the Dardanelles and in the Balkans, but it counted but one battalion of Legion—commanders: Lieutenant-Colonel Nieger, Dardanelles 1915, Lieutenant-Colonel Geay, Serbia 1916, Lieutenant-Colonel Romieu, Macedonia 1917-1918.

(4) The French Army wore khaki uniforms in World War II—I believe the last horizon blues went out in 1936. The aviation, Armee de l'Air, wore dark blue, but all field units were in khaki.

THE Foth Derby.

Query:—I have just acquired a camera whose reputation is unknown to me. Therefore I would like to have any information you may have on it. This camera is a "Foth Derby," anastigmat, 1:3.5, F-50m/m. Focal distances are from 1, 1.25, 1.5, 1.75, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 20 meters and infinity. Diaphragm: 3.5, 4.5, 6.3, 9, 12.5, and 18. Focal plane shutter: B, 25, 50, 75, 100, 200, and 500. Film size is 12/16 pictures to a roll. Includes a miniature bellows, timing device, and telescopic view-finder.

I have been using various types of German and Belgian film of the panchromatic and isochrom variety. Neither work too well and it has been suggested to me that I use Kodak Panatomic-X upon my return to America. My prints lack contrast and are composed of a combination of light and dark grays. Detail is often lacking in my negatives with an appearance of fog, suggesting a leak in my camera. Many of my photographs have been taken at f-11, 1/50 second, but appear to be underexposed. Is it wiser to reduce the shutter speed to 1/25 or open the diaphragm to f 9?

Will you please explain the conversion factor for changing Sch/Din to Tungsten and Weston readings and vice-versa.

—Burton Sherman
c/o ADVENTURE

Reply by Paul L. Anderson:—The Foth Derby is a good camera, and if in good condition should give you excellent results.

Without examination, I can't tell you precisely the reason for the foggy appearance of your negatives, since this may be due to one or more of several causes. Your description suggests that it comes either from defective film (film which is too old, or which has been exposed to dampness); from faulty processing in development; or from a dirty lens. If it is due to a light leak in the camera, it will probably (though not certainly) show itself as dark streaks in the negative.

Indoors, with the camera closed and covered with a dark cloth, wind one section of film through without exposing it to light; then when the roll is developed, if this section shows an appearance of fog, the trouble is due to defective film or to faulty processing. To clean the lens, breathe on it lightly, and wipe it gently with a soft, well-washed cotton—*not* linen—cloth. If it is very dirty, moisten the cloth slightly with water, but do not soak it, and do not use alcohol or any liquid except clean water. There is a possibility that the lens may have been improperly cleaned in the past, so that the surface is badly scratched and has an appearance suggesting ground glass; if this is the case, there is nothing to do except have a factory re-polish job done. Knowing nothing of the details of processing, I can't tell you how to check up on this, except by comparing your finished film with one taken in another camera, and processed by the same person.

Panatomic X is an excellent film, but being designed especially to give fine grain, it is necessarily rather slow. Unless you want to enlarge more than 5 or 6 diameters, I would suggest that you use either Super XX, which is 4 times as fast as Panatomic X; or Plus X, which is twice as fast. Either of these will give good results unless you want to enlarge greatly; personally, I use 2¼x3¼ film, and prefer Super XX.

Very few persons can hold a focal plane shutter camera rigid enough when giving ex-

posures longer than 1/50 second, and many cannot even with a between-lens shutter. Therefore I would not advise your giving exposures longer than 1/50 except on a tripod or other rigid support. But with your lens opened to F/3.5 and the camera focussed at 4 meters, you will have everything in focus from about 9 feet to infinity. Or if you stop down to F/6.3, you will have everything in focus from about 5 feet to infinity. These figures are based on a circle of confusion of 1/200 inch, and are very rough, but at all events they will serve to show that you don't need to stop down in order to get depth of field. As for definition, you will probably get sharper pictures at F/6.3 than at F/11; with most lenses, the optimum definition is obtained at about two stops smaller than the largest opening—in your case, this would be F/6.3. When you stop down more than this, diffraction impairs the definition, and though at F/11 this impairment would be very slight, still there is no point to stopping down.

From all that you say, I suspect that the lack of contrast in your prints is due either to inferior films or to a foggy lens. If you still find lack of contrast when you have checked these points, longer development time or a stronger developer should fix the matter.

Since the Scheiner, Din, Weston systems of speed rating are based on different assumptions, there is no definite conversion factor possible. The following is an approximation, taken from the booklet of the General Electric meter.

Weston	*American Scheiner*	*European Scheiner*	*Din*
64	27	33	20/10
125	30	36	23/10
250	33	39	26/10

You will see from this that an increase of three degrees on either the Scheiner or the Din scale means a doubling of the speed on the Weston scale. But you will have to make a few experimental exposures in order to know just what rating you must use with your Weston meter. And remember that all *any* meter will do is to give you a starting point on which to base your own judgment; to rely implicitly on the meter will only bring you tribulation.

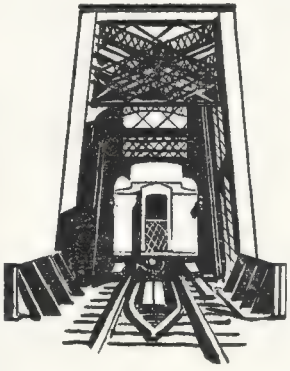
UPISCHEE-MOOSIS or Old Two Toes.

Query:—How do writers of animal stories arrive at the names, which they give to their animal characters? Are they Indian names or are they made up in the author's mind? I note, for example, that in several stories in current issues of magazines, there are Solus, a grizzly; Luthia, an old otter; Kulma, a doe; and Abalo, a coyote.

It comes to me that I have seen Cree names for animals, birds, trees, etc., somewhere and I am wondering if perhaps the tribal languages are employed in their various localities for this purpose.

—Charles Taylor
4729 Carondelet St.
New Orleans, La.

Reply by H. S. M. Kemp:—The matter of where authors dig up their "Indian" names for their animal heroes has always been to me, too, a deep and impenetrable mystery. I have finally come to the conclusion that they get them from either medical dictionaries, seed catalogues or take them from the name-plates of Spanish bungalows. Mind you, I can't quarrel with the lads who write of the denizens of the Painted Desert nor of the Alaskan



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hinterlands, but when they cover Cree country—which would be about two-thirds of all Canada—they sort of get me down. Especially when two of the three animals mentioned have approximate Cree names and the third turns up with a name that could be anything from Hottentot to Fijian. I can't quite understand why an author will take all the trouble in the world to write an animal story that is accurate in all details and then leave the most important part, the thing's name, to guesswork or worse. There is one drawback, of course, to using all Cree names, and that is that many of them are too long and too hard to pronounce. Nekik, for the otter, and Seekoos, for the weasel, are all right; but when you get down to Machachaganis, for the coyote, and Upischee-moosis, (Little Moose), for the common jumping-deer, well, in these days of paper-conservation, I guess the poor author is somewhat limited.

But I can give you a rule of thumb to go by when next you read an animal-yarn where the locale is Cree country: if you come across words (or names) having the letters D, F, L, R or V in them, you may rest assured they aren't Cree names at all. As a matter of fact, the Crees have only nine consonants in their language; but, boy! what they can do with 'em!

A FILLER for a hollow tree.

Query:—Would you advise me as to whether or not there is a plastic filler to replace the concrete filler for tree cavity work? If so, where can I find or obtain more information on this subject?

—George I. McMinn
P. O. Box 641
Waco, Texas

Reply by Arthur H. Carhart:—I am not sure whether you are asking if there is plastic material to fill cavities in tree surgery that is of an asphalt type or the new, bright colored stuff used in producing many gadgets. I should assume the asphalt type is what you are interested in.

There were several products on the market for filling cavities in tree surgery before the war. I've not picked up any reference to them recently. They were an asphaltum combination and did very well. There now may be advanced materials in this field, and the very latest and best information on them can be secured if you write the U. S. Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, Wisconsin, and state exactly what you wish in information.

My own experience with filling tree cavities extends over a number of years; my professional training is that of landscape architect. It was our experience that when you had smaller cavities a quick job could be done with some of the plastics, but if there was a sizeable portion of a tree trunk to be dug out, concrete, preferably with plastic joints to allow for the slight swaying of the tree, was most satisfactory of all materials to use and of lower cost.

A part of the technique, as you undoubtably know, is to remove all the rotten wood, use some good disinfectant to kill any fungus sores that might remain under the concrete filler, in some instances paint the wood with an asphalt paint, then put in the filling so it smooths out exactly meeting the heart wood at the edges of the cavity. If this point of junction is done smoothly, the growing tissue of the tree, the "inner bark" or cambium layer, will often grow out and do a fairly good job of covering the cavity filling.

I'd certainly recommend the Forest Products Laboratory as the source from which you will get full and authentic information on the best current materials available for filling tree cavities. There now may be some new materials for this work that they would know about—not only what commercial companies are doing, but even in advance of what may be coming on the market.

INSECT disease-carriers of Central America.

Query:—What disease-carrying insects would one meet in Central America other than the malaria mosquito?

—Mack O'Neil
Box 203
Cranby, Colo.

Rely by Dr. S. W. Frost:—There are many other insects and their near relatives that transmit disease. One of the most important is a true bug Triatoma which transmits a disease known as Chagas fever. In some respects this disease is worse than malaria or yellow fever because so little is known about it and there is no method of control possible at the present time.

Ticks are also important disease-carrying forms. There are probably many unknown diseases carried by ticks in Central America. Ticks are very abundant in the tropics and occur on many animals especially the monkey. The diseases they carry have not been fully studied. Relapsing fever is one well-known disease carried by ticks.

Bubonic plague is carried by a flea which in turn attacks the rat. This is one reason why the rat is much dreaded and why extensive rat exterminating campaigns have been conducted in many places including the cities of California.

There are other insects that are responsible for carrying diseases. Some of them inject definite diseases into man, others are simple carriers. This is a large subject which it treated in detail in various text books. One of the best books on this subject is Hermes Medical Entomology published by MacMillan Co., 1939.

THE year of the Pig.

Query:—I desire some information on an old Chinese coin or charm which I unearthed in the Kiangwan sector of Shanghai in 1944 while I was a Japanese prisoner of war. Below I have attempted to draw a picture of the coin of which I speak. I have read enough Chinese history to know that the eight trigrams on one side of the coin are the original eight drawn up by Fu Hsi about the year 4,000 B. C. and that the entire Chinese ideograph system sprang from them. I would appreciate any information as to its origin or value which you might be able to give me.

—Sgt. Charles L. Harrison
Marine Corps Base
San Diego, 40, Calif.

OBVERSE

The characters are not exact copies from the coin as it is worn considerably.

REVERSE

Center hole encircled with characters—outside edge encircled with pictures of birds, animals, a snake, etc.

Reply by William L. Clark:—The Chinese medal which you have described is one which is carried by a Chinese to keep him from harm. As used on this medal, the animals represent each two-hour period out of the twenty-four, starting from 11:00 p. m. 11:00 p. m. to 1:00 a. m. is represented by the Rat, and following in sequence we have the Ox, Tiger, Hare, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Fowl, Dog and Pig. As worked out in their sexagenary cycle of dating, these characters are also used to represent the year, 1947 being the year of the Pig. There is no way of actually dating one of these medals as they have been made continuously for the last few centuries. These medals are not uncommon and we have several specimens at our Museum. I do not know exactly what one would be worth but I think two dollars would be about tops.

GET a horse.

Query:—My husband and I are going to buy two riding horses. We are sadly in need of information. We intend to try to find a mare and gelding both approximately 16 hands and weighing 12,000-14,000. These will be horses of no particular breed, 4-6 years old, and in the best condition we can find. Now for the questions:

1) How much pasture do they need in the summer?

2) How much oats do they each require if they are ridden two hours a day?

3) What hay and oats do they need in the winter if they are ridden the same?

4) How often do they need to be shod?

5) Do they need blankets in the winter if they are in the barn at night and in bad weather? Climate is not too bad here.

6) If we take them on a trip in the summer (3 or 4 days at a time), how much equipment can the mare carry more than the western saddle and my 120 lbs.?

7) Should saddle bags be used or can packs be tied behind the saddle?

8) What can the gelding carry besides the saddle and my husband's 165 lbs.?

9) What grain must we carry?

10) What gait is good for them?

11) How much rest do they need in the day?

12) How far can we go in a day at the gait you suggest?

13) I have trouble with the girths. Is it possible to tell when it is the right tightness?

I think we are up on most everything else but would appreciate anything else you might think we need to know.

—Mr. & Mrs. J. C. Lasswell, Jr.
Alderwood Manor, Wash.

Rely by John Richard Young:—I'm afraid I cannot give you very definite answers to your questions, for too many factors which you do not explain and which I therefore do not know would influence any answers which you might find really helpful.

For example: How much pasture do the horses need in summer? That depends on the pasture and on each horse's appetite and the daily work it is called on to do. Do you have in mind a lush, rich pasture or a thin, scanty one—and what kind of grass? This question cannot be answered any more definitely than you can lay down an exact rule about how much food, or exercise, a man needs. The best thing to do is ask an experienced horseman who lives in your locality. Perhaps he can even look over the pasture you have in mind.

2. As a rough rule, I'd say about seven to ten pounds of oats a day for each horse, divided into three feeds a day; but again it depends on the horse—some have hearty appetites and others are light feeders—and on how hard he may be worked in the two hours of daily exercise. A good way to tell whether a horse is being properly fed is to watch his

condition sharply. If he becomes thin and acts tired, he is not being fed enough for the amount of work he must do; if he becomes fat and too frisky for easy handling, he needs less grain and maybe more work.

3. Same as No. 2 above, plus about 14 pounds of hay a day, each.

4. How often a horse must be shod is just as indefinite a question as how much he should be fed daily. It depends on the kind of work you give him and the kind of terrain he is worked over. As a general rule, a horse should be shod about once a month or every five weeks so as properly to trim the hoof growth since the shoes were put on. A horse ridden on hard roads or stony ground may wear his shoes more rapidly. A horse that seldom gets off soft footing, such as in a grassy pasture, may not need shoes at all; all that becomes necessary then is regular trimming of the hoofs. Proper shoeing is a delicate matter; I would advise you to shop around until you are convinced that you have found a GOOD blacksmith, one who knows his stuff. A poor smith can ruin a perfectly sound horse. Two general rules to keep in mind are: (a) the shoe should be made to fit the hoof, never the hoof forced to fit the shoe; (b) the frog of the foot should always be in contact with the ground. I think you will find the U. S. Department of Agriculture's bulletin on shoeing well worth studying. Write for it at Washington, D. C.

5. You say, "Climate is not too bad here," but how bad is that? I am not familiar with your climate; I know only that it is generally damp in winter, but not how cold. I'd play safe by blanketing the horses in the stable overnight, especially if they'll be in straight stalls with less room to move about than if they were in boxes. But too much coddling makes a horse "delicate." Also you neglect to say whether you intend to clip your horses in winter. Without knowing your exact conditions, I'd say that a New Zealand blanket should be warm enough for a healthy horse in a damp climate, if he's stabled overnight and if the temperature does not drop below freezing. Remember this: healthy horses can stand much cold and much wetness—but combine the two and you'll have trouble. Let your horses have as much fresh air in their stable as posible, without exposing them to direct drafts.

6. How much any horse can comfortably carry no one can say, without testing the horse. How much you can carry yourself has no relation to how much another woman of your weight can carry. You may be naturally stronger than she is, better built for weightlifting, or vice versa. Your letter leads me to believe that you think a horse's weightcarrying ability is in direct proportion to its size (and here I'd like to comment on your astounding plan to buy animals weighing from 12,000 to 14,000 pounds; I'm sure you mean 1,200 to 1,400 pounds, for a 12,000-pound horse would be as big as an elephant, if not bigger). But mere size alone has nothing to do with weightcarrying ability. The strongest weightcarrying riding horses are under 16 hands. Many good weightcarriers are even under 15 hands. Considering your weight, 120 pounds, and your husband's 165 and the fact that you want *riding* horses, I think you would be foolish to shop for horses of from 1,200 to 1,400 pounds. Such animals would almost certainly be clumsy for riding purposes; if not, they'll be very expensive. In fact, I advise you not to buy a horse for mere size at all. Size means nothing, except sometimes from a "good looks" viewpoint, if the rider is tall. Buy for conformation. The best weightcarriers have short backs and good bone. How much equipment you can carry depends entirely on the horses you buy. Keep in mind that you want RIDING horses and riding horses should have easy gaits that give you a comfortable ride. You could easily buy a 1,400-pound plug which could carry both of you and all your equipment to boot; but riding him would be no fun. I would suggest that before you buy any horse, take him for a two-weeks or one-month trial period. If the seller objects to this, go elsewhere.

7. Both saddlebags and packs can be used, but heavy packs should not be tied behind the saddle because they will then be pressing on the weakest part of a horse's back and may result in soreness or injury. As a general rule, it's best to carry only your extra clothing—coat, slicker, etc.—lashed behind the cantle of the saddle and heavier equipment in the saddlebags (be sure they are evenly balanced) or over the fork of the saddle. The farther behind his center of gravity weight is placed, the more tiring it is for a horse to carry. (This includes *you*. Don't "ride the cantle" with your feet thrust forward.) Why not, if you can afford it, buy a packhorse to lug your equipment? The idea would be worth trying if your proposed three-or four-day trips are frequent.

8. Same as No. 6.

9. You needn't carry any if you can buy it along the routes you follow. Otherwise, if you ride eight or ten hours a day, I'd take along about ten pounds of grain a day for each horse. But again this depends on the horses and on the country you travel over. If the grazing along the way is good and if the horses are rangebred, you might even not carry grain at all, and travel leisurely. Certainly your horses would lose weight, but not enough to do them any harm in a few days if you gave them a day or two to rest up when you returned home. However, this wouldn't go so well with horses accustomed to grain while in the stable and ridden only two hours a day at home, as you mention. (Do you see now where the packhorse would come in handy?) The trouble with all your questions is that there are too many conditions and factors I don't know. I cannot lay down any

definite, inflexible rules. You haven't even bought your horses yet!

10. For all-day riding stick to a walk and trot, mostly a walk. But walking does not mean that you should just let your mounts slop along any old way. Make them *march.*

11. How much rest do you need a day? I don't know. If you ride ten hours a day, including an hour's noon halt, that's plenty. It depends on how tough your horses may be and how well conditioned they are, how much weight they carry, whether the trails are level or hilly, even how well you ride them. At the noon halt, feed them grain, about a pound each.

12. I have no idea how far you can go in a day. It depends on how fast you want to go and the horses' walking ability. Five miles an hour might be a good average.

13. Generally, a girth is tight enough when you can push four fingers of one hand between it and the horse's side and the girth feels merely snug—neither uncomfortably tight nor very loose. Perhaps your "trouble" is that the horse is kidding you: when you tighten the girth he blows himself up. A sharp upward poke with your right knee should take some of the wind out of him—with a grunt. After you have ridden for about ten minutes and the horse has warmed up thoroly, it's a good idea then to dismount and test the girth again. Usually you will find that you can take up a few inches of slack. Be sure that the skin under the girth lies smoothly, is not wrinkled. It's better to have the girth a little loose than too tight.

I'll be interested in knowing how your planned trips and horse-buying turn out. If there is more information I can give you, just ask, but please try to be more specific in your queries and a bit less general in the data you give me from which to work. After all—horses are no more like machines than we are!

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Shotguns: *American and foreign, wing shooting and field trials*—ROY S. TINNEY, Chatham, New Jersey.

Skiing—WILLIAM C. CLAPP. The Mountain Book Shop, North Conway, N. H.

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Swimming—LOUIS DEB. HANDLEY, 115 West 11th St., N. Y., N. Y.

Track—JACKSON SCHOLS, R. D. No. 1, Doylestown, Pa.

Woodcraft—PAUL M. FINK, Jonesboro, Tenn.

Wrestling—MURL E. THRUSH, New York Athletic Club, 59th St. and 7th Ave., N. Y., N. Y.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

Anthropology: *American, north of the Panama Canal, customs, dress, architecture; pottery and decorative arts, weapons and implements, fetishism, social divisions*—ARTHUR WOODWARD, Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles, Calif.

Entomology: *Insects and spiders; venomous and disease-carrying insects*—DR. S. W. FROST, 465 E. Foster Ave., State College, Penna.

Forestry, North American: *The U. S. Forestry Service, our national forests, conservation and use*—A. H. CARHART, c/o *Adventure.*

Forestry, Tropical: *Tropical forests and products*—WM. R. BARBOUR, care of U. S. Forest Service, Glenn Bldg., Atlanta, Ga.

Herpetology: *Reptiles and amphibians*—CLIFFORD H. POPE, c/o *Adventure.*

Mining, Prospecting, and Precious Stones: *Anywhere in North America, Prospectors' outfitting; any mineral, metallic or non-metallic*—VICTOR SHAW, c/o *Adventure.*

Photography: *Outfitting, work in out-of-the way places; general information*—PAUL L. ANDERSON, 36 Washington St., East Orange, N. J.

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★New Guinea—L. P. B. ARMIT, c/o *Adventure.*

★New Zealand, Cook Island, Samoa—TOM L. MILLS, 27 Bowen St., Feilding, New Zealand.

★Australia and Tasmania—ALAN FOLEY, 243 Elizabeth St., Sydney, Australia.

★South Sea Islands—WILLIAM MCCREADIE, No. 1 Flat "Scarborough," 83 Sidney Rd., Manley, N. S. W., Australia.

Hawaii—CARL J. KUNZ, P.O. Box 584, Canoga Park, Calif.

★Madagascar—RALPH LINTON, Dept. of Anthropology, Columbia University, N. Y., N. Y.

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★Central America—ROBERT SPIERS BENJAMIN, Clasificador 466, Santiago, Chile.

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Mexico, Part 1 *Northern Border States*—J. W. WHITEAKER, 2903 San Gabriel St., Austin, Tex. **2** *Quintana Roo, Yucatan, Campeche*—CAPTAIN W. RUSSELL SHEETS, care of *Adventure.* **3** ★ *West Coast beginning with State of Sinaloa; Central and Southern Mexico including Tabasco and Chiapas*—WALLACE MONTGOMERY, Club Americano, Bolivar 31, Mexico, D.F.

Canada, Part 1 ★*Southeastern Quebec*—WILLIAM MACMILLAN, 89 Laurentide Ave., Quebec, Canada. **2** *Ottawa Valley and Southeastern Ontario*—HARRY M. MOORE, 579 Isabella, Pembroke, Ont., Canada. **3** ★*Georgian Bay and Southern Ontario; National Parks Camping*—A. D. L. ROBINSON, 103 Wembly Rd., Toronto, Ont., Can. **4** ★*Northern Saskatchewan; Indian life and language, hunting, trapping*— H. S. M. KEMP, 501 10th St. E., Prince Albert, Sask., Canada. **5** ★*Yukon, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Alberta*—PHILIP H. GODSELL, F.R.G.S., General Delivery, Airdrie, Alberta, Canada.

Alaska—FRANK RICHARDSON PIERCE, 5747 Ambleside Rd., Seattle, Wash.

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Middle Western U. S., Part 1 *Ohio River and Tributaries and Mississippi River*—GEO. A. ZERR, 31 Cannon St., Pittsburgh 5, Penna. **2** *Lower Mississippi from St. Louis down, Louisiana swamps, St. Francis, Arkansas Bottom*—RAYMOND S. SPEARS, 11331 Burin Ave., Inglewood, Calif.

Eastern U. S., Part 1 *Maine*—"CHIEF" STANWOOD, East Sullivan, Me. **2** *Vt., N. H., Conn., R. I., Mass.*—HOWARD R VOIGHT, P. O. Box 716 Woodmont, Conn. **3** *Adirondacks, New York*—RAYMOND S. SPEARS, 11331 Burin Ave., Ingelwood, Calif. **4** *Ala., Tenn., Miss., N. C., S. C., Fla- Ga.*—HAPSBURG LIEBE, care of *Adventure.* **5** *The Great Smokies and Appalachian Mountains south of Virginia*—PAUL M. FINK, Jonesboro, Tenn.

LOST TRAILS

NOTE: We offer this department to readers who wish to get in touch again with friends or acquaintances separated by years or chance. Give your own name and full address. Please notify *Adventure* immediately should you establish contact with the person you are seeking. Space permitting, each inquiry addressed to *Lost Trails* will be run in three consecutive issues. Requests by and concerning women are declined, as not considered effective in a magazine published for men. *Adventure* also will decline any notice that may not seem a sincere effort to recover an old friendship, or that may not seem suitable to the editors for any other reason. No charge is made for publication of notices.

Francis Charles Aitkens, R.C.A.F., would like news of John Dowrie (Mick) Roberts. He was born in Dublin about 1891, went overseas with the Canadian Artillery from Victoria October, 1915, and returned in 1921. He worked in Clinton, B.C., then was a storekeeper in Victoria. In 1926 he went to California where he worked at Petaluma. The last address was Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, in 1938. Please communicate with Sqdn. Ldr. F. C. Aitkens, Box L-160, R.M.D.4, Victoria, B.C. Canada.

I am anxious to contact my uncle, John Dunlop, native of Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia. He is of medium height, gray hair, and in his middle fifties, probably a salesman or an accountant. He was last seen in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1926. Charles Dunlop, 63 Pleasant St., Truro, Nova Scotia.

I would like to contact my buddy, Herbert C. Summers. We soldiered together with Co. C. 393rd Inf., 99 Div. I last saw him during the Battle of the Bulge, Dec. 16, 1944. His home is somewhere in Charleston, W. Virginia. Anyone knowing him please contact George O. Parker, 250 Columbia St., Cumberland, Md.

I would like to inquire about William Breese, Paul Dees, and Jakie Marlow with whom I served in the 12th Photo Section, France Field, Canal Zone. Please contact James C. Long, San. Eng., N. J. State Hospital, Greystone Park, N. J.

I am trying to locate my buddy, Norman Proper. He was on the *S. S. Minotaur, S. S. Matonian,* and the *S. S. Esso Baytown.* His hometown is Denver, Colo., and he is 6′ 2″ tall, weighing about 165 lbs. He has brown hair. He was last heard of in Port Aransas, Texas. William Quinn, 3314 Waterloo Place, Dallas, Texas.

I am very interested in locating the following buddies of mine. We served in the 26th Regt., First Inf. Div., both in the states and the ETO; in England, Scotland, North Africa, and Sicily, where we were separated. S/Sgt. John Page, about 5′ 7″, 140 lbs. ruddy complexion, reddish brown wavy hair, square features, and about 33 years of age. Page is formerly of Jersey City, N. J. Sgt. George (Big George) Brighindi, 6′ 1″, 200 lbs., olive complexion, black wavy hair, plays guitar. He is from Bridgeport, Conn., about 29. T/Sgt. Arthur (Lippy) Lippman, dark complexion, black thinning wavy hair, about 5′ 6″, slender build, from New York City, is about 32 years old. Any information will be appreciated by Danny Monahan, 354 Water St., Leominster, Mass.

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of Arthur Micue or Matthews, please write N. F. Preo, 3000 S. Lawndale Ave., Chicago 23, Ill. He enlisted from Maine in the U. S. Army, served in Texas and Mexico with the cavalry against Villa about 1917-1918.

I would appreciate any help in finding George Van Denworker. He would be about 80 years old now. He raised my wife's father, George A. Van Denworker, along with three other boys, one of whom was his own. The family last heard from him in 1935 when he was in San Francisco. Please contact Laurence C. Buck, 317½ N. Maine St., Ellensburg, Washington.

Information wanted about Lt. Gene Manghi, O-1641540, 56th Signal Battalion, who wrote me from Czechoslovakia regarding my article on hybrid oak crop trees published in *Popular Science,* April, 1945. Any knowledge of him should be forwarded to Thomas Q. Mitchell, 1564 Broadway, New York, N. Y., c/o BILLBOARD.

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of my son, Hercules McClain, veteran of World War I, last heard of at 519½ South Daley St., Los Angeles, Calif., engaged in lanscape gardening at that time, 1932, please write to his brother, William D. Meeks, Apt. 1, 102 Palmetto Dr., Pasadena, 4, Calif.

I want to contact Stephen Kolowski from Chicago who was on the Secretary of Navy's yacht and the Receiving Station in Washington. Also Joe Vieditch who was on the old Reuben James 245 in 1920—and William Jennings Bryan Guest from St. Louis who was on the old battleship, the New Jersey. Would also like to find William Wischertch from the Naval Magazine in Coco Solo and Naval Air Station along with William Henry Hanna Hurst from New Orleans who was on the old Flusser 289 in 1920. Please write L. W. Fraser, CGM, USN, 16th Fleet Staff, Orange, Texas.

I would appreciate any information about Frank and Fred Reed of New Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The last known of Frank, he was still in Pennsylvania and Fred was somewhere on the West Coast. Anyone knowing of either Frank's or Fred's whereabouts, please write to M. M. Mausser, R.F.D. No. 1, Bernard, Iowa.

I should like to locate Vernie Baldwin, 35 years old, lived in Live Oak and Jacksonville, Florida, in 1928 and early in the 30's. He is related to John Sterling and is the son of B. O. Baldwin. Please write J. E. Cross, P. O. Box 61, Live Oak, Fla.

I am very anxious to contact my old buddy, former S/Sgt. Harry Rogers. We served with the 491st Bomb. Group H. He may be in Biloxi, Miss., or Mobile, Ala. I have been trying since October, 1945, to find him and any help you may be able to give me will be appreciated. Please write to George Paraspolo, 627 29th St., San Francisco, Calif.

Will any soldier serving in Company A, 275th Engineers Bn., 75th Division, in Holland during the first part of 1944 who knew Cpl. F/5 Thomas L. Graham or Quentin Rall please write to Mrs. J. E. Graham, Artesia, New Mexico.

I would like to locate Ed La Vergue who was on the *USS Marblehead* at the time of her historic encounter with the Japanese. Please write J. O. Jernigan, 1014 W. Eastland Ave., Nashville, Tenn.

Can anyone help me find my brother-in-law, Anthony Ofsian? I last heard from him in 1943 when he sailed with the Merchant Marine. He usually sailed the Robin Lines as a cook or chief steward. His mother is very sick and is asking for him. Anyone having any information regarding Tony, please communicate with Joseph J. Machovic, 833 Abbott Court, Baltimore 2, Md.

I am anxious to contact Lt. Cal Newton, formerly of the 491st Post Battalion, Transportation Corps, formed at Indiantown Gap Military Reservation, Penna. Newton attended the Army Administrative Officer Candidate School No. 6 at State College, Mississippi, and is urged to contact Edwin F. Ficklen, Statler Hotel, 423 E. 7th St., Los Angeles 13, Calif.

I am trying to locate some friends of mine whom I haven't seen since 1938. I don't remember their names, but I met them in the summer of 1936 when they were living in East Bennington, New Hampshire. There were about 12 or 14 in the family. They went to Antrim District School in 1937 and moved away about November of '37. They moved back in 1938 and then moved away again. They may be living in northern N. H. or Vt. The four of them that I knew would be between 14 and 18. If anyone has any information about them, please contact Francis R. DeCapot, 65 Amherst St., Nashua, N. H.

Paul "Duke" Byrnes, 934½ Forsythe St., Toledo, Ohio, would like to locate his old buddy, James "Sugar" Solyer with whom he worked in Nevada in '39. We worked together for five years with the Div. of Interior and his hometown was Germantown, Ohio. His last known whereabouts was on the U.S.S. Sands, in New York Harbor in 1940. Any knowing his present locality, please write to Paul "Duke" Byrnes.

W. H. McCarty, 965 Clinton St., Napa, California wants information of his two brothers, A. W. McCarty, whose nickname is "Buck," and W. F. McCarty, sometimes called "Bill."

For some time I have been trying to locate my father, George Franklin Watson. He was last known to be in Cleveland, Ohio. If any one has any information whatsoever about him, please write to G. F. Watson, 695 E. Utica St., Buffalo 11, N. Y.

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Will anyone who served with Corporal William Yarian, Company B, 297th Engineer (C) Battalion in France, please write to his mother, Mrs. H. Yarian, 28411 Rollcrest Road, Route 1, Farmington, Michigan.

I am trying to find my buddy, Arthur Von Boot, or Bot. We worked together for the Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania, in Pittsburgh, during the spring of 1902. He was a lineman and was headed for the southwestern gold fields. He knew me only by my nickname, "Si Perkins." Anyone knowing his present whereabouts, please write to H. H. Epler, 2102 Hollingsworth Street, New Kensington, Penna.

W. G. Carter, General Delivery, Tucson, Arizona wishes to locate Charles F. Head, about 59 years old, born in North Bay, Ontario, Canada. Would also like to find Ellsworth Head, adopted by Willis family at an early age. Charles and Ellsworth had another brother, Tom, and a sister, Leah. Would much appreciate any information concerning these people.

I would appreciate any information as to the whereabouts of Joseph R. Connolly, formerly of Westfield, N. J., who has lived in and around Los Angeles since the summer of 1938. He was drafted into the U. S. Army in the early part of World War II. He was in the Air Corps at Hamilton Field, California, and at Hammond Field, California. After being discharged he resided for a time in Los Angeles and later became a civilian employee at a U. S. Naval Construction Unit at Inyokern, California. His father died and I would like to get in touch with him. Please write to J. R. Cummings, 329a Arlington Avenue, Jersey City, N. J.

Would greatly appreciate learning of the whereabouts of Harry (Gus) Stewart, Richard Donato and Sgt. Zimmer all at No. 2 Hospital, Det. Med. Dept., Fort Bragg, N. C. Stewart was from Philadelphia, Donato from New York and Zimmer from somewhere in the Middle West. All served in EENT, in 1942 and 1943. Dr. James O. Baxter, Jr., 1500 Front St., Beaufort, N. C.

Would like to contact Veterans of the French Foreign Legion. If you know of any, please pass this along. Write Elton Horsley, 3804 Mt. Washington, Dallas, Texas.

I am trying to find my uncle, August Timm, who lives somewhere in Canada. His last known address was Loon Lake or Loon River, Sask., Canada. We have not heard from him for some time. I wrote him a letter last September and it was returned with the statement that he had moved away years ago. He is over sixty years old. I am worried about him, and would be very glad if you can help us locate him. Please write Alexander Fink, 2004 Larry Street, Phila. 42, Pa.

I would like information as to the whereabouts of Donald W. Drilling, age 20 or 21 years, about 5′ 7″ tall, with light brown hair and brown eyes. He lived in Chicago before going into service. He was a member of the 121st Infantry Regiment, 8th Infantry Division during the war. Anyone having information please write to William E. Toth, 1204 Morrow Street, Pittsburgh 21, Pennsylvania.

(Continued from page 67)

MR. CHALMERS was on board with the pilot, and almost weeping from hysteria and gratitude. "Thank God," he kept saying. "Thank God you did the right thing!" Captain Pearly did not understand. Captain Pearly was shaking a little and his face was drawn.

"I don't know what you mean, sir," he said, "but I can only say I did my best as I promised. Twelve hours behind the schedule but—"

"To hell with the schedule," shouted Mr. Chalmers. "I tried to radio you. The Coast Guard and Navy tried. The George Channel was dynamite. A dozen live mines had broken loose from the Navy base there and were drifting around in the fog. Just before you came up to the island a freighter went in and was blown up with all hands. If you'd gone in—"

"I went around," said Captain Pearly carefully, "because I don't like to take chances. I didn't know about any mines. I'm just glad anyway things turned out all right."

"Turned out all right!" Mr. Chalmers yelled. "You saved the Line—saved the new run—saved me . . . My God, man, you're a hero! The cautious skipper who never takes chances. You've got the *Saxon Prince* for as long as you want her. Name your own ticket!"

Captain Pearly took off his uniform cap and wiped his wet forehead while he let the words sink in. Then he looked at Mr. Ames and Mr. Ames was grinning. "All right," said Captain Pearly. "I'll write my own ticket. Stick me back in the tramps. I'd like my old ship again. I guess I wasn't cut out to be a liner man."

"Anything, anything," babbled Mr. Chalmers happily. "Any ship you want." Mr. Ames loomed beside Mr. Chalmers and coughed to get attention.

"One thing I'd like to ask, sir. I think I'd prefer a tramp too. Can I go as Captain Pearly's first mate?" He smiled apologetically. "You see, sir—we're both pretty cautious men."

THE END

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BEERY SCHOOL OF HORSEMANSHIP
Dept. 841 Pleasant Hill, Ohio

(Continued from page 91)

leg. Then he stepped into full view of Carney.

"Around there somewhere," Young Bob said.

Carney eyed him closely. Then he quit scratching at the earth and came from the shelter. Suspicion replaced greed on his face; then his habitual quiet expression took control.

"It had better be. You'll find if you lied to me you won't get off as easy as the old man." He glanced at the sky. "Plenty of time in the morning. Cook supper, kid."

It was not entirely the quiet settling of increasing cold that kept Young Bob awake that night. For a long time he could hear the trickle running in the rock near the shelter, running with a different sound from the two nights before. Then he could not hear it at all. He lay quietly and waited, feeling the cold grow and grow in the still night.

Winter was coming hard and fast to the high country.

Midnight now, he guessed. If it was going to freeze, why didn't it hurry up? Maybe it wasn't as cold as he thought, though his booted feet sticking out of his wired blankets felt frozen now. In spite of the cold and his determination to stay awake, he dozed.

The sky was lightening with false dawn when he came into alert wakefulness. He lay shivering, colder than he could remember being in all his life.

A sudden crack brought him struggling to sit up. There came a heavy grinding noise, a startled curse from Carney. Then a thud that shook the ground.

Dawn was a half hour gone when Young Bob unwired the last strand of wire. He walked toward the lean-to.

Carney's head and shoulders were clear. The rest of him was under the remains of the shelter and on top of that was a five-ton granite slab. Ice glittered on the heavy rock; more ice clung to the parent rib above.

Still plastered against the main rock were the daubs of mud and leaves that he had used to seal the crack in the granite and create a reservoir that freezing had expanded into powerful, justice-dealing pressure.

THE END

YOUR FIRST MOVE AT THE FIRST SIGN OF CANCER

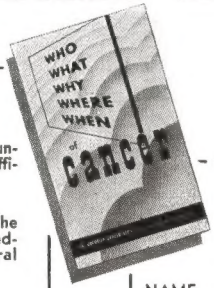
THE way to win against cancer is to discover it early—don't be afraid to learn the truth. Your doctor may give you the good news your fears are groundless. Or that a relatively simple course of treatment, in the light of new medical discoveries, is producing wonderful results in similar cases. But whatever you're told, the sooner you act, the better the news will be.

Always be on the lookout for cancer's danger signals. Watch for them in yourself, in your friends and in members of your family.

Remember—you can't *diagnose* cancer yourself, but you can *suspect* it. Be on the lookout. Check up on yourself from time to time.

CANCER'S DANGER SIGNALS

1. Any sore that does not heal, particularly about the tongue, mouth or lips.
2. A painless lump or thickening, especially in the breast, lip or tongue.
3. Progressive change in the color or size of a wart, mole or birthmark.
4. Persistent indigestion.
5. Persistent hoarseness, unexplained cough, or difficulty in swallowing.
6. Bloody discharge from the nipple or irregular bleeding from any of the natural body openings.
7. Any change in the normal bowel habits.



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